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TERMS IN ADVANCE.

No. 173.

A BOOK OF POEMS.

BY ERNEST H. RICHMOND.

To-day I chanced to find a little book
I had not seen in many vanished years,
And there was something in its faded look
That filled my eyes and blinded them with tears.

I turned its pages over, thinking when
In far-off, happy summer days gone by,
We read its poems, quaint and strangely sweet,
Together, in the twilight, she and I.

And I remembered many tender smiles,
And oh, how many a whispered word,
And songs we sang together, sweeter far,
I thought, than ever was the song of birds.

I opened at the place where last we read
The gentle poet's fragrance-haunted rhyme;
Ah, no! what precious memories lingered there
Of that far-off enchanted summertime!

Between the faded and the yellow leaves
Some withered roses of the June-time lay,
With perfume clinging still about their hearts,
Like memories that can not pass away.

And I remembered when she sat there;
I think I never can forget that day,
She sat with me, where, looking down the hill,
We saw the merry mowers making hay.

The air was full of odors new and sweet;
I had been reading, but a weary grown,
I closed the book, and with her hand in mine,
Forgot the world, remembering her alone.

"I love you, dear," I said; she smiled to see
The love-light shining in my earnest eyes,
And kissed me on my brow. I feel it yet!
The memory of such kisses never dies.

"Take this," she said, and gave me, from her hair,
These withered flowers, then brilliant as the May,
And keep them, and sometime they'll bring you back
A fragrant memory of this happy day."

Oh, withered flowers! That was so long ago!
Yet, like old memories, you are so sweet,
On that green hill her grave is; lying there,
If she remembers, how her heart must beat!

The Specter Barque.

A TALE OF THE PACIFIC.

BY CAPT. MAYNE REID.

AUTHOR OF "TRACKED TO DEATH," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BLACK SQUALL.

THE mystery of the disappearance of the

chased vessel is explained by a very natural

phenomenon—a fog.

Not the haze already spoken of, but a dense

bank of dark vapor, that, drifting over the

surface of the sea, has suddenly enveloped the

barque in its floating folds.

It threatens to do the same with the ship.

Those aboard of her see this; and while their

surprise is almost instantly over, an undefined

fear continues to torture them.

It is not on account of the fog. That can

not frighten men who have experienced all the

dangers of the deep, and oft groped their way

through icy seas shrouded in almost amorphous

darkness.

Their fear springs from the idea already men-

tioned, by this last circumstance strengthened,

that all the phenomena are not natural.

The fog itself may be, but what has brought it on,

just at a crisis when they were speculating

about the character of the chased vessel—some

doubting her honesty, others skeptical of her

reality—not a few boldly averring her to be a

phantom? If an accident of Nature, certainly

a remarkable one—in point of time a strange

contingency!

The reader may smile at credulity of this

kind. Though not he who has mixed among

the men of the fore-castle—whatever the nationality

of the ship, and whether merchantman or

man-of-war. Not all the training of naval

schools, nor the boasted enlightenment of this

our age, has fully eradicated from the mind of

the canvas-clad mariner a belief in something

more than he has seen—something *dehors la nature*.

To suppose him emancipated from supersti-

tion, would be to hold him of higher intelli-

gence than his fellow-men who stay ashore,

plowing the soil, as he does the sea. To thou-

sands of these he can point, saying: behold the

believers in *spiritual* existences, in very ghosts,

not in days gone by, but now—ay, now more

than ever within memory of man.

Then let not landsmen sneer at such fan-

cies—not a whit more absurd than their own credu-

lous conceits about table-turning and the other

paraphernalia of mesmeric manifestations.

In addition to this feeling on the frigate—

confined to a few, there is now cause for real

alarm, in which all have a share, even her offi-

cers. A fog is before their eyes—apparently

fast approaching them. They see that it has

enveloped the strange vessel, spreading over her

like a pall; and threatens to do the same with

their own ship.

Is there any thing alarming in this? A lands-

man might make answer in the negative. Not

so the skilled sailor. Not so the captain of the

frigate and his officers.

Even the youngest of them can tell there is

danger in the sign. For these have witnessed

a similar phenomenon before; and know that

that thick sky seen southward is not a fog of

the ordinary kind, but one that portends the

most terrible of storms.

They know that it is near, and will soon

be on them, quick as a white squall. Though it

is not this, but the black squall of the Pacific.

Enough in the name to cause apprehension

for the safety of their ship. Though scarce of

her are they thinking. She is a stout vessel,

and can stand the buffeting of the tempest.

Their anxiety is about their absent shipmates.

All comprehend the peril in which these are

placed. Even if it were but a common fog, they

know the danger of the two ships getting

separated, and then what will be the fate of

those left on board the barque?

The strange vessel has been signaling distress.

Is it scarcity of provisions or want of water?

In either case she will be worse off now. Three

additional throats and stomachs!

It can not be shortage of hands to work her

sails; surely not, with them all set?

Sickness then? Some scourge affecting the



"As I told you, shipmates; we'll never see that lieutenant again; nor that young reefer. No—they're gone for good!"

crew—cholera or yellow fever? This is proba-

ble by the lieutenant having sent back for the

surgeon—only him!

Conjecturing ends, and suddenly. The time

for action has arrived. The dark cloud comes

drifting on, and is soon around the ship, envelop-

ing her in its damp, murky embrace, cling-

ing to her canvas still spread, and wetting it

til big drops rain down upon her decks!

It is no longer a question of the surgeon start-

ing forth on his errand of humanity; nor the

outer returning to the beached barque. Now

there is no chance of discovering the latter.

In such a fog the finest ship that ever sailed sea,

with the smartest crew that ever manned ves-

sel, will be helpless as a man groping his way

in Cimmerian darkness.

For a time there is no more thought of the

barque, and not much about the absent officers.

Almost on the instant of the frigate's sails be-

coming enveloped in vapor, they are struck by

a strong wind, coming from a quarter the very

opposite to that for which they were set.

The voice of the master, now, thunders

through a trumpet, orders all canvas to be in-

stantly taken in.

The order is executed with the promptitude

peculiar to a man-of-war; and in less than ten

minutes the huge ship is tossing amidst tem-

pestuous waves, with only three sails set—jib,

fore-course and storm-trysail.

CHAPTER VII.

GONE FOR GOOD.

A SHIP under a storm-trysail is a sight always

melancholy to the mariner. It tells of a strug-

gle with wind and wave—a serious conflict

with the elements, that may well cause anxiety

to those who have to carry it on.

Such is the situation of the American frigate

soon after being surrounded by the fog. The

sea, late so smooth, calm as a sleeping child, is

now furiously raging around her, the waves

tempest-lashed, showing crests like the manes

of white horses, tossed in mad prancing.

Amid them the huge war-ship, but a short

while before motionless, a leviathan, apparently

the sea's lord, is now its slave, and soon may be

its victim. Bobbing like a cork, she is buffeted

from wave to wave, or thrown into the troughs

between, as if cast there in scorn.

She has enough trouble taking care of herself

without thought of any other ship—even one

flying a flag of distress. Ere long she may have

to hoist the same signal herself!

But there are skilled seamen aboard, who

well know what they are about—what watch

and ward every wave that comes sweeping

along. Some of these, mountains high, show

the big ship almost on beam-ends, till the steer-

man feels her well-nigh regardless of the rud-

der.

There are but two courses left for safety; and

her captain weighs the choice between them.

They must lie to, or send before the wind. To

do the latter might take them away from the

barque, now no longer seen? And she may

never be sighted again by the frigate? Ten

chances to one if she will; or she may not de-

cide upon running down the wind. Even if she

do, there will be but slight hope of overhau-

ling her, supposing the storm to continue for any

length of time.

The probabilities are that the barque will lie

to. The lieutenant, now aboard of her, has no

doubt control; he will order her canvas to be

furlled, and set the storm-trysail as on board the

frigate. Under the circumstances he would not

think of parting from the spot.

Thus reflecting, the frigate's commander de-

termines to stay where he is, and ride out the

gale.

Every thing is already snug, and the ship's

head put right for the wind's eye.

Aboard of her, brave hearts are filled with

bad forebodings. Not from any fear for them-

selves, but for the safety of their shipmates on

the barque. Both the young officers are favor-

ites with their comrades of the quarter-deck, as

with the crew. So, too, the coxswain who ac-

companies them.

What will be their fate?

All are thinking of it, but no one offers a sur-

mise; no one can tell to what they have com-

mitted themselves. They only know, that in

the tempest now raging, there must be danger

to the strange vessel, without counting that

signaled by the reversed ensign, without

thought of the mystery already wrapping her.

The heart of every man in the war-ship is

beating with humanity, pulsing with pent-up

fear.

And while waves are pitching her about, and

winds rattling loudly amid her spars and rig-

ging, a yet louder sound is heard mingling with

their monotonies. It is heard at equal inter-

vals; for it is the minute gun which the frigate

has commenced firing. Not as a signal of dis-

tress, asking for assistance; but one of counsel

and cheer seeking to give it!

Every sixty seconds, amid the mad surging

of the sea and the hoarse growling of the gale,

the boom of cannon breaks their monotonous

continuity.

The night comes down, adding to the dark-

ness, though not much to the dilemma in which

the frigate has found herself. The fog and

storm combined make her situation perilous, as

might be. It could not well be worse.

Both continue throughout the night; and on

through the night she keeps discharging her

signal guns.

No one aboard of her thinks of listening for a

response. In all probability there is no cannon

—nothing upon the polacca that could give it.

Close upon the hours of morning the storm

begins to abate, and the clouds to dissipate.

The fog seems to be lifting, or drifting off to

some other part of the ocean.

With hope again dawning comes the dawn of

day. The crew of the frigate—every man of

them, officers and tars—are upon deck.

They stand along the ship's sides, ranged in

rows by the bulwarks, gazing out upon the sea.

There is no fog now—not even the thinnest

film. The sky is as clear as silk, and blue as a

boat-race ribbon, fresh unfolded. The sea the

same, its big billows no longer showing sharp

crests, but rounded, and rolling gently along.

Over these the sailors look, scanning the sur-

face. Their glances are sent searchingly to

every quarter—every point of the compass.

The officers sweep the horizon with their

glasses, ranging around the circle where the

two blues meet.

But, neither naked eye nor telescope can dis-

cern aught there. Only the swelling sea and

the sapphire sky. Some gulls here and there

flapping their white wings, an albatross, with

pinions of broader spread, or a tropic bird, with

long al-feathers trailing train-like behind it.

No barque, polacca, rigged or otherwise; no

ship of any kind; no sign of a sail; no canvas

spread, except that of the frigate herself, now

standing under close-reefed courses.

She is alone upon the ocean—in the midst of

the mighty Pacific—a mere speck upon its far-

stretching, illimitable expanse!

Every man aboard of her feels this, and feels

it with a sense of sadness. But, they are silent,

each inquiring of himself what is become of the

cipline is one bearing the "Flag of the Stars and Stripes." She is a man-of-war, full-sized, conspicuous by her handsome hull and clean, tapering spars. Her sails are stowed snug, lashed neatly along the yards; in her rigging not a rope out of place.

Upon her decks, white as holystone can make them, the same regularity is observable. Every cable is coiled, every brace trinity turned upon its belaying-pin.

It could not be otherwise with the *Crusader*, commanded by Captain Bracebridge. He is a sailor of the old school who takes a pride in his ship.

He has his crew aboard, every one of them. There is not a name on the *Crusader's* books but has its representative in a live sailor, either seen upon her decks or who can at any moment be summoned thither by the whistle of the boatswain.

If left to themselves, but few of the "Crusaders" would care to desert. Even gold does not tempt them to leave a ship where everything is so agreeable. For Captain Bracebridge does all in his power to make matters pleasant for the men, as well as the officers. He sees that the former get good grub and plenty of it, including the regulation allowance of grog, with now and then an extra glass. He permits them to have amusements among themselves; while the officers treat them to *tableaux-vivants*, charades, and private theatricals.

To crown all, a grand ball has been given on board the ship, previous to her departure for the Sandwich Islands—an event near at hand. It was in return for an entertainment of the same kind, given by some grandees of the town in honor of her officers, at which more than one of these made acquaintances they wished to meet again; two desiring it with a longing of a special kind.

In other words, two of the ship's officers have fallen in love, with a brace of shore damsels, with whom they have danced, and perhaps a little flirted.

They are both young men—in rank neither much over twenty. For all this they are as much in love as they could be at thirty—it may be more.

It is three days after the ball, and these two officers are standing upon the poop-deck, conversing about it. They are apart from their comrades; purposely, as their talk is confidential.

The elder, called Crozier—Edward Crozier—is a little over twenty, while the younger, William Cadwallader, is about as much under it. Crozier has passed his term of probationary service, and is now a passed midshipman, while the other is still a "midshipmite." And a type of this last, just as Marryat would have made him, is Willie Cadwallader; bright face, light-colored hair, curling over cheeks ruddy as the bloom upon a peach or pippin. He is a Philadelphia boy, of Welsh descent, from which he derives an eye of turquoise blue, often observed in the descendants of the Cyniri; as also hair of a hue seen nowhere else—like threads of gold invested with a tissue of silver.

Quite different is Edward Crozier, who hails from the State and city of New York. His hair, also slightly curling, is dark brown. His complexion corresponds, and a pair of mustaches, already well grown, lie like leeches along his lip, the tips turned upward. An aquiline nose, and broad jaw-blades, denote resolution—a character borne out by the glance of an eye that never shows quailing.

He is of more than medium size, with a figure denoting great strength, and capable of carrying out any resolve his mind may make—the shoulders square set, breast well bowed out, the arms and limbs in symmetrical proportion.

In point of personal appearance he is the superior, though both are handsome fellows—each in his own style.

And as the styles are different, so are their dispositions—these rather contrasting. Crozier is serious, sedate, and though any thing but morose, rarely given to mirth. From the face of Cadwallader the laugh is rarely absent, and the dimple on his cheek—to employ a printer's phrase—seems stereotyped. With the young Pennsylvanian a joke might be carried to the extreme of the practical. He would seek his revenge by a lack of like kind.

With him of New York the same would be dangerous, and might end in stern resentment—perhaps in a duel.

Notwithstanding their difference, the two are friends—the fastest on the ship. This perhaps due to the very dissimilarity of their natures. When not separated by their respective duties, they keep together aboard ship, and together if ashore. They eat together, drink together, and for the first time in the lives of both, have commenced making love together.

Fortune has favored them in this: that they are not in love with the same lady—still further, that their sweethearts do not dwell apart, but live under one roof, and belong to one family.

For all that, they are not sisters, nor yet cousins; though standing in a certain relationship. One is the aunt of the other.

Such kinship might seem to augur inequality in their ages. There is none, or only a little. Not much more than between the mids themselves. The aunt is, as may be supposed, the senior of her niece.

And as Fate has willed it, the lots of the Jovers have been cast in conformity—in proper symmetry and proportion. Crozier is in love with the *tie*; Cadwallader with the *sobrina*.

I use these Spanish words, because the same that have been for some time sounding in the ears of the two young officers. Their sweethearts are Spanish of the purest blood. They are respectively the daughter and grand-daughter of Don Gregorio Montijo, whose dwelling can be seen from the ship—a mansion of imposing appearance, in the Mexican *hacienda* style, pitched upon the summit of a hill, that slopes up from the shore, at some distance off, outside the city walls.

While conversing the two young officers have their eyes turned upon it, one of the two assisting his vision with a telescope.

It is Cadwallader who uses the glass. Holding it to his eye, he says:

"I think I see them, Ned. At all events, on the house-top there's something like two heads just showing over the parapet. I'll take odds it's the dear girls! I wonder if they can see us?"

"Not likely, unless, like ourselves, they are provided with telescopes."

"By Jove! I believe they've got that. I see something that glances. I'll warrant one of them's looking through a lens, and it's my sweetheart."

"Bah! give me the glass, Cad. With all those bright blue eyes you're so proud of, I can sight a sail further than you."

"A sail—yes. But not a pretty face. No—you're blind to beauty, else you'd never have taken on to that old fellow, leaving the niece to me. Ha! ha! ha!"

"Old indeed! She's as young as you're—

younger—at least looks so. One tress of her hair is worth all on your girl's head. Look at that."

Crozier pulls out a lock, and holds it up before the other's eyes. It gleams golden with a radiance of red. He adds:

"Did you ever see anything in the way of

woman's hair so beautiful? Observe the gloss and color—pure amber!"

"Oakum!" cries Cadwallader, sneeringly. "You look at this!" he adds, also exhibiting a tress. "I suppose you fancied yourself the only one who has received favors. You see I've got one as well as you. There's a bit of hair that beside yours is like costly silk alongside cheap cotton. What do you think of it? There's a color for you?"

"The color of tar!" retorts Crozier. "The two stand holding the locks of hair, each caressing his own. Then both burst into laughter and stow away their tresses."

Crozier in turn taking hold of the glass levels it on the hacienda.

After a time he says:

"You're right about one thing, Will—those heads are the same from which we've got our hair. The two girls, to a certainty. And I fancy they're looking this way—I hope expecting us. Well, we'll be with them, please God, before the sun goes down, and then you'll see how much superior bright amber is to dull black anywhere in the world, but especially in the light of a California sunset."

"Nowhere, Ned, under either sun or moon. Give me the girl that's got raven hair."

"For me her with locks of gold."

"Bada uno a su gusto, as my sweetheart has taught me to say in her sweet Castilian. But now, Ned, talking serious, do you think the captain will allow us to go ashore?"

"He must, it's our right, both of us. Besides, I know he will."

"How do you know it?"

"Bah, *ma bobbi*, as our Irish second would say; you're the son of a poor man—good blood, I admit—while I am the heir of ten thousand a year, with a father who stands well at Washington. I have asked leave for both. Therefore don't be uneasy about our getting it. Captain Bracebridge is no snob; but for all that he knows his own interest, and won't refuse a fair request. See, there's the first lieutenant coming to give his answer, which, I'll bet ten dollars will be in the affirmative."

"Young gentlemen, the captain gives you leave to go ashore. The gig will take you, landing where you wish. You are to send the boat back, and give the coxswain orders where and when he is to await you on your return to the ship. Take my advice, youngsters, and don't be getting into any difficulties on land. As you know, San Francisco is now full of all sorts of queer characters—a very pandemonium of devils. For the sake of the service, and the honor of the uniform you wear, steer clear of scrapes, and above all, give a wide berth to wine and women."

The lieutenant, a grave man, after thus delivering himself, turns on his heel and walks away, leaving the two mids to their meditations. They do not meditate long. Leave has been granted to go ashore, and with it an order for the gig to be got ready. The boat is in the water, and her crew swarming over the side.

Crozier and Cadwallader only stay to give a touch to their toilet—preparatory to appearing under eyes both have more reason to dread than a broadside of great guns.

This arranged, they drop down the manropes, seat themselves in the stern sheets, and give the order to shove off.

Soon they are gliding over the tranquil waters of San Francisco Bay, not in the direction of the landing wharf, but for a point on the beach, some distance outside the city walls.

The beacon, toward which they are steering, is the house of Don Gregorio Montijo.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 172.)

Stealing a Heart:
OR,
THE RIVAL HALF-SISTERS.
A TALE OF THE TIDES OF LOVE.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.
AUTHOR OF "BLACK HAND," "IRON AND GOLD," "RED SCORFION," "PEARL OF PEARS," "HERRICKS, THE HUNCHBACK," "CAT AND RIGER," "FLAMING FAL-ISMAY," "BLACK CRESCENT," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER IX.
IS HE THE HEIR?

THE morning subsequent to the arrival of Jasper Gowan and Henry Yost at Myrtleworth was as grandly beautiful as its predecessors.

The grove was crowded with birds, and the whole air was vocal with wild harmonies.

Madame St. Sylvain was again sitting in her easy-chair, near one of the windows that opened on the broad porch. The peculiar freshness and perfume of the crisp autumn atmosphere, with its gleeful songs, was full of charms for her; it roused a feeling something akin to her vigor of early years.

The lawyer and the young man had not showed themselves at breakfast table.

The meal passed with the usual solemnity—Coral and Myrtle occupied their accustomed places, and neither betrayed, in look or act, how deeply each felt and thought upon the events of the last twenty-four hours.

After the meal, Madame sought the parlor, where she now sat, seemingly as unconcerned as if nothing had happened on the day previous.

But, though her face was calm, she was inwardly annoyed. To one of her age, the occurrences, and the excitement consequent, were not without an effect; and at the moment she was any thing but well.

While her pale eyes gazed outward, she saw a horseman approaching.

"Another visitor," she thought. "I hate visitors. Why can't they keep away?"

As he drew nearer, she watched him curiously. Something about him engaged her.

"How familiar his face is! Have I ever met him? 'Um! I can't recollect.'"

Presently, Nannie brought in a card.

"'William Manning,' read the lady, aloud.

"'Um! yes; I've heard of him. Rumor says he's an honest man, and a steady worker—a farmer, eh, Nannie?'"

"Yes, madame, and everybody says good of him. He's never been here before, madame, that I recollect."

"I wonder what he wants? Do we need any thing from his farm, Nannie?"

"No, madame."

"Ah! Well—well, show him in. I'll see him."

William Manning, as he was ushered into Madame's presence, bowed very respectfully, and paused near the door.

"Good-morning," she said, with her pale eyes riveted on his face; and, mentally, she added: "Astounding! Wonderful! What a likeness!—he has the eyes, the chin, the mouth—how strange!"

"Madame, I have called to see you on a matter of very great importance. May I hope—"

"Yes, yes; 'um! Well, besetted, sir. Take a chair. And again, to herself: "Even his voice—it's very like hers."

He placed a chair near her, and said, drawing some papers from his breast-pocket:

"Perhaps my name is not unfamiliar to you, Mrs. St. Sylvain?"

"I have heard of you," she returned, still gazing intently at him.

"People know me as William Manning, the

young farmer. I believe, as such, I have ever acted so as to merit the esteem of friends and neighbors. I remark this, not in conceit, but to further introduce myself. As William Manning, I have striven to make the name a good one. But, I have recently gained certain information which convinces me that my name is not Manning."

"Ah!" Madame started slightly.

"I have a paper here, which I would like to read to you. May I intrude upon your time?"

"Yes—go on, sir. 'Um!'"

Evidently a strange something had aroused a sudden interest in Madame St. Sylvain.

"I shall read it, word for word, and will be very glad, indeed, if you will hear me through."

"I am listening."

Unfolding one of the manuscripts, he began, slowly and distinctly:

"About twenty-three years ago, Edgar, the son of Ermine St. Sylvain, married one Constance Faynhope, a young lady living north—"

"Ah!—ahem!" Madame interrupted, shifting her position in her chair.

He paused and looked up.

"Go on, sir—go on; I hear."

"The match was brought about by the relatives of both parties, and as is generally the case in such marriages, there was no love; consequently, no happiness. One year after the wedding, there was a child. They had it christened Cora. When this child was about two years old, husband and wife separated, he taking Cora. Almost immediately upon the separation, Constance gave birth to another babe. It cost her life. But, before she died, she had the letters 'M. St. S.' pricked in India ink on the back of the babe, just by the shoulder-blade—the letters were very small."

"Ah!—ahem!" broke in Madame, again.

"But, the family of Constance Faynhope had met with reverses. They had been rich—suddenly, they became poor. Constance did not wish them to be burdened with the support and education of her child; so, ere she breathed her last, she gave it to the woman who was nursing her, and who had been her attendant for years. This woman's name was Lizzie Lorne. She was, in after time, in your employ, here at Myrtleworth, disguised, and under the name of Sibyl Down."

"Ah!" exclaimed Madame, quickly; adding, to herself, while she frowned: "Can it be possible? And Sibyl Down was standing close by, on that stormy night, when Edgar—ha! I must not think of it. It makes me shiver. I saw her, though she did not know it. And I heard her utter a dark prophecy, which, even now, I remember with a tremble. I can never forget it!" Then, aloud: "Very well; go on, sir."

"Let me ask you, Mrs. St. Sylvain, if this little item of family history is not correct?"

"Yes, I admit it. And I am listening, sir. Is there more?"

"Did not Edgar St. Sylvain make a will, bequeathing his all to his second child by his wife, Constance—the child that was named Mark St. Sylvain?"

"Ha! yes; he did. But, where is that child?" "There was a tincture of eagerness in Madame's question."

"That I am about to tell you. The dying words of Constance were: 'Lizzie, take my boy with you, and keep him always near Myrtleworth. His mother's family is now too poor to do him much good. But, his father is rich; and, perhaps, some day Mark may be proclaimed the heir.'"

Madame was deeply attentive. Not a word escaped her.

"Lizzie Lorne," resumed the young man, reading from the open sheet, "brought the child to Virginia. She was but a sewing-girl, though, and she knew, if she kept the boy, it could never advance in the world. So she took it, one night, to the farm-house of Simon Manning—"

An indefinite exclamation fell from Madame's lips; she leaned slightly forward.

"Well, sir?—well?"

"On the shawl, in which the babe was wrapped, was pinned a slip, containing these words: 'In the voice of mercy, you are begged to take in and nourish this waif. The day will come when it will claim an estate far richer than that of Simon Manning.' Simon did take the little, helpless thing under his care and protection. He was a father to it. He had lost his only child some months previous, and this we come seemed to fill up, in a measure, the vacuum created in his heart. Lizzie Lorne, under the name of Sibyl Down, guarded it, from a distance, ever afterward, till it grew up. Simon Manning called this child William. Both he and his wife soon learned to love it. And when Sarah Manning died, years ago, the lonely widower fastened all the dotings of his soul upon the bright-eyed boy that played upon his knee."

"And this boy?" began Madame St. Sylvain.

"This boy is now a man. Need I add that I am he?"

"Can it be? Can it be?" she uttered, muttering, and gazing fixedly at him, in the same puzzled way. Yet his eyes, his chin—even his voice is like that of Constance, as I heard it many years ago!"

"Now, Mrs. St. Sylvain—"

"Young man, do you claim to be the heir of Edgar St. Sylvain?"

"I do."

"Have you the letters on your shoulder?"

"Yes; though I never saw them until last night. I told my old father of what I had discovered. He wept—the great tears rolled down his cheeks, and he drew me to his breast, as he had been wont to do when I was but a romping boy. It was a hard blow to him; for his heart hopes were centered all in me, the only being he had loved since the death of his wife. And at thought of parting with me—his companion for so long, in seasons of fortune and failure, and at the dear old hearth-stone—he cried, Mrs. St. Sylvain, cried like a child. But, he told me it was true—my coming to his shelter, a little waif, nearly nineteen years past. He it was who showed me the letters, 'M. St. S.' on my shoulder-blade."

William had not spoken without some emotion. He could not help it, as he recalled the sight of old Simon shedding tears, when he imagined that the boy he had come to call his own, and whom he fairly idolized, might leave him now forever. For only William knew the depth of that aged man's love.

But, while determined to claim his heritage, even though by it he would be aiming a blow at his own sister, he had no intention of separating from his doting guardian of earlier time.

"And what direct proofs have you of your identity?" asked Madame St. Sylvain, breaking in on his thoughts, in a tone that was merely business-like.

"What I have read you is the affidavit of Lizzie Lorne; more, Lizzie Lorne is now alive, and ready to testify in my behalf. Here, too, is the very will, and the marriage-certificate. The latter bears your own signature, as a witness at the ceremony."

He handed her the papers named. She almost rudely snatched them from him.

"Where did you get them? How?"

"From Lizzie Lorne herself."

"They are the genuine documents!" she said, half-aloud; and then to herself: "It must be so! William Manning must be

the heir. Lizzie Lorne shall come forward. He must be identified. No wonder his face was familiar, when he so closely resembles his mother, Constance. Ha! ha! ha! where is Jasper Gowan now?"

Then to William:

"Here you take these, and guard them well. I am inclined to believe you. You have the features of your mother—you look like the heir should look; something tells me it must be so. You talk honestly. Yet it is strange—strange that you should come to light this way."

"Not so very strange after all, considering the circumstances," he said, smiling.

"Lizzie Lorne must come forward and testify. If you are identified, it is well. Mind, I am half-convinced already. Is Lizzie far from here?"

"Oh, no."

"Let us say no more of it just now—drop it for the present. To-morrow I will want to talk with you. I will see you in the parlor again this afternoon. You will remain at Myrtleworth, eh?"

"If agreeable."

"Ringing the bell she called: 'Nannie! Nannie!'"

"Yes, madame." The girl was always close at hand.

"Show this gentleman to a room. He is my guest. See that he is waited upon."

"Yes, madame. This way, sir, if you please," with a courtesy.

Manning arose, and bowing to Madame St. Sylvain, followed the slave from the room.

The old lady looked for some time in silence toward the door after he had gone; then her dim eyes lighted and sparkled in a triumphant gleam.

"Ah! ah! Where is Jasper Gowan now?—and his scapegrace impostor! This is the heir—I see it, I feel it. But how strange it is that he should turn up in the son of Simon Manning, the old farmer. And—ha! ha! ha!"

she laughed at the thought—"Richard Wayne has come on a goose chase! I got him off just in time. It is admirable—all of it. For Myrtle must never become his bride—no, no. His pride would be shocked when he learned the secret—which would certainly come out some day, and they would be miserable always afterward; ay, he might hate her. I say it is good! The heir of Edgar St. Sylvain is William Manning!"

"We shall see!" hissed a low voice on the porch near the window, so low that it did not reach Madame's ears.

CHAPTER X.
THE LAWYER'S ENEMY.

THE lips that framed the hiss were Jasper Gowan's.

The lawyer happened to be on the porch when William Manning arrived. It was by chance, however, that he had played the eaves-dropper.

The conversation between Madame St. Sylvain and her visitor issued plainly through the open window; and it was not long before he discovered that the object of the young man's visit was of significant importance to him.

He listened, and his brow knit in a cloudy expression as he heard Manning set forth his claim to the St. Sylvain heritage.

When Madame dismissed her guest, Gowan left the porch and strode away from the house. After going some distance through the grove he fell into a slower walk.

"What if, after all," he finally muttered, coming to a halt, "this fellow is the true heir, and I have made a mistake, as I feared once or twice while at the 'Lion.' Can it be the Henry Yost has deceived me? Yet he has 'M. St. S.' pricked upon his shoulder blade; and he told me enough of his history to astonish me when I compare it to what this aspirant has been telling Madame St. Sylvain! And he had a certificate—a will!—pausing perplexedly on the last. 'What can it mean? I have the certificate and the will; his can't be genuine. But, what is to be done? Ermine St. Sylvain is already convinced that he is the true heir. Death! Am I to be defeated in this way? They spoke of Lizzie Lorne! Confusion! If the woman is alive, and will testify in his interest, then all is lost! I must see to this. I will not be vanquished. He shall be removed!"

"Have a care, Jasper Gowan!—ye would no dare do the young man harm."

The voice that interrupted him was weird and croaking.

It was so unexpected that it startled him, and he wheeled suddenly around.

Bec. Foara was standing almost at his elbow. The old hag leaned on a serpent-like stick, with body bent, and the hood of her long cloak was pulled down till it cast a shadow on her swarthy face.

Her two gleaming eyes snapped at Gowan as she added:

"Those are dark words, Jasper Gowan. There's a look of murder in your eye. Have a care I say; you must not harm the young man."

"Curse you for a witch!" he exclaimed.

"No, I'm no witch; but I know a great deal—a great deal," meaningly.

"You seem to know too much. What are you prying about these premises for?"

"What gave you the right to ask Bec. Foara that? It may be I've more business here than even you. And I don't come with false wills and certificates. Oh! look black if you like. Do you remember, Jasper Gowan, the first time you stopped at the 'Lion'?"

"Well!" sharply.

"You heard a noise in your room, by the window?"

"What do you mean, hag?"

"It was a robbery that night. The will and the certificate were taken from your valise, and false ones put in their place. Look at 'em; and Bec. Foara's word for it, there's not a name that's genuine on what you have!"

Gowan recoiled that he had not looked at the will and the certificate on taking them from his valise when starting with Yost for Myrtleworth. In a sudden fear he now drew them forth to examine them.

He could not repress a cry.

The paper whose exterior resembled the will was nothing but a blank sheet of paper; the marriage-certificate, though properly filled out, was utterly worthless, in that it contained strange names.

The articles were crumpled in a savage grasp; his eyes, kindling with rage, fastened upon Bec. Foara.

"Woman!—hag! you are the thief. Where are the genuine papers?"

"Find 'em if you can," was the return, and her dagger-like orbs glittered maliciously.

"By Heaven! you know where they are."

"Ye'll never learn from Bec. Foara, be sure of that."

Keep watching 'em, Max, and if any thing happens, come to me.

In a moment she was gone.

CHAPTER XI.

THE GAMBLER'S "NEW DEAL."

AN afternoon of splendor.

The sun, now past its zenith, had warmed the fair bosom of Nature, and awakened to animation many beauties in the surroundings of Myrtleworth.

As far as the eye could reach, over field or forest, there were to be seen strange blendings and mystic hues—the red-gold foliage of autumn, the weirdly mellow skies, the nameless murmurings of myriad voices, all weaving in one sweet harmony and chenille softness around a spot so dull.

A sound broke forth that was not unlike the half-hushed warble of a mourning bird; a low, hardly audible melody of song.

A figure was roaming near the far side of the grove, flitting hither and thither, and stooping anov, to pick up a rarely-tinted leaf, or to pluck a browned stem from its bed of moss.

It was Myrtle. She was very fond of autumn leaves and grasses, and gathered many a unique bouquet to place about her room.

She was singing lowly; the words were speaking, truly, the feelings of her heart at the moment.

"The Love that murmurs in my breast,
And makes me shed the secret tear,
Nor day, nor night, my heart has rest,
For night and day his voice I hear."

Myrtle did not dream that, while her lips were framing the secret of her soul—betraying how her thoughts were centered on absent Richard Wayne—a pair of darkly-brilliant eyes were watching her from a bushy screen near by.

Unconscious of the surveillance, she sung on, in a strain that seemed to tell of a gradual melancholy.

Presently, she sat down on a gnarled root, and began to arrange, in an idle way, the bunch of grasses which she held.

A stream of sunlight poured down upon her through the naked branches of the trees, and lent a peculiar loveliness to the picture.

"Richard Wayne—Richard Wayne—" she breathed softly, to herself, as she twirled and twirled the leaves in her fingers. "Oh! how dear that name sounds to me now. How sweet it is to love—and be loved. And I do love him with my whole heart! Richard Wayne—Richard Wayne—will you come back to me?"

"Miss St. Sylvan."

It was a sudden though timid intrusion upon her musings. She looked quickly up with a startled mien.

Henry Yost was standing over her.

"I hope I do not interrupt some sacred reverie of yours?" he continued, with a smile.

"Oh, no. Are you, too, hunting for something pretty in the grove?—you can see what I've been at. Did you hear what I was saying?"

"To the last inquiry—no. To the first—yes, and I think I've found it. I heard you singing. It was full of music—words, voice, air, all. Beautiful! It reminded me of another verse by the same author:

"I more than once have heard at night,
A song like those thy lips have given,
And it was sung by shapes of light,
Who seemed, like thee, to breathe of heaven."

Myrtle blushed. The compliment was too plain. Too earnest.

Yost was certainly handsome—unusually so this afternoon; and his flashing bright eyes were sparkling with admiration for the young girl as she spoke.

She felt that he was gazing down at her, but she could not return that gaze; there was something in it which fascinated dangerously even while it repelled.

"I was wandering at random," he went on, immediately, "and studying nature, something I delight in. Are you fond of it?"

"Oh, yes."

"Ah! then you, like myself, are a dreamer."

"To a certain extent. Time may be wasted in these silent communings; the busy world may, sometimes, call these dreamers idlers among those with whom they live. But the mind, to develop healthily, must feed on healthy objects; and what more sweet, more invigorating, more harmless, than to quaff the dew of Eruition?—give the body strength by viewing and thinking upon that nature part of which we are?—a dream, a study both that delights the heart, and pours the essence of love into our veins."

"We are much alike, I am sure. Our vicinity is not so bright as it was six months ago—and Myrtleworth never was noted for much beauty; but, there are charms that linger, and fresh ones even in the change. All seasons have pleasures for me—because I seek them."

"You think, then, that every thing is, and only to be sought for, to be gained."

"Yes—if you mean contentment."

"And one can always be happy if they choose?"

"Yes."

Ah! Myrtle answered his question upon belief.

A few years of trial—there were then hovering closer and closer—were destined to shatter the foundations of her philosophy.

"But I too Nature for deeper purposes," she pursued, venturing to seat herself near her.

Under a spell of thought that questions what I see, I think there is more balm for a drooping spirit, more feast for newer energy, than in a tedious sitting and listening to a tedious sermon monotonous from the tombly recess of the church altar. For God is all around you in these times of meditation; and the voices and choirs that praise Him have no law to govern the anthem, save a pure, unquestionable impulse."

Strange speeches from Harry Yost, the gambler—and the words were uttered with a mild, impressive eloquence.

It had the effect of banishing, to a degree, the reserve Myrtle had at the first evinced toward him.

But the dark, shining eyes that bent upon her still had that strange, meaning gaze in their depth—an expression which she did not detect.

"Oh, well," she said, artlessly, "I love Nature for her pictures. I have pets: the flowers, the birds, mosses, leaves and grasses—I love them all. And—yes, I have not very pensive at times when rambling about."

"Yours is a sunnier clime than mine, Miss St. Sylvan."

"I believe grandma said you came from the north?"

"Yes."

"I am sorry I can not remain and converse with you longer," half interrupted Myrtle, rising.

"What!—not going? We are hardly acquainted yet."

"I promised grandma I would return to her very soon, and I've been out for nearly an hour now. She is complaining to-day."

"So I heard her remark at dinner."

"You will excuse me, Mr. Yost?"

"I suppose I must. I will stay here and talk to myself, and imagine, with my eyes shut, that I still have you for a companion. I hope I have not enjoyed your society for the last time."

"I am always pleased in being entertaining if I can," was the ambiguous reply; and smiling

an adieu, she moved away in the direction of the house.

"Au revoir," he called after her pleasantly.

While Myrtle receded amid the trees, Yost leaned back against the tree-trunk, and followed her with his eyes.

There was a serious look in the face of the young gambler; after a while he frowned in a scarce-perceptible way, and broke out, reflectively:

"By George! if I could win that pure girl, I would throw off this mask, and let Jaspur Gowan and his plots slide—money and all. I am in love with her—honestly so. If I could persuade her—I'd turn over a new leaf in my life, and never stake another cent on a card. She is angelic, tender, susceptible—why not try?"

And Myrtle, as she approached the old mansion, was saying:

"I don't like him; why it is I can't imagine. When grandma introduced him and Mr. Gowan at dinner, I immediately disliked them. Mr. Yost certainly has the manners and speech of a true gentleman, but somehow I don't feel at ease in his company, and especially was it so just now when we were alone. Pshaw! I believe I'm foolish."

She cast a look back at him, over her shoulder.

He was in the act of striking a match on the fancily-wrought cigar case which he carried, and held the cigar ready to his lips.

Suddenly she saw him spring to his feet; the match and cigar fell to the earth, and the face which she had conceded in her own mind to be handsome was contorted in a scowl of passion.

She paused involuntarily to ascertain the cause of this.

A few yards from Yost, leaning on a gun, was another man, a stranger, she thought. His presence had created the change in the gambler's exterior. And Myrtle caught two words that were borne faintly to her as she wondered what the tableau meant:

"You here!"

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 170.)

Barbara's Fate

OR,
A BRIDE, BUT NOT A WIFE.

BY MRS. MARY REED CROWELL,
AUTHOR OF "LOVE BLIND," "OATH BOUND," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

VENGEANCE AT LAST!

IT was a delightful apartment in which Ethel Wyndham, the popular actress, was sitting, late that night.

A little distance off stood a beautiful walnut cradle, with a high canopy of azure silk under white lace; in the cozy nest slept the actress' babe; and watching it, with an expression on her face that you never would have dreamed could have saddened its ripe, rare beauty.

She had not removed her dress of amber satin in which she had performed the last act, and on her white arms and neck still gleamed the diamonds that had flashed with every turn of her body.

And her darkly-pale face, where it seemed a smile never again could come, was bent in earnest attention over the sleeping child.

"Grace," she said, in those low, pleasant tones, to a colored nurse who dozed in her chair, "Zella has not awakened since I went out? Bring me those smaller bouquets from the table, and take those boots off for me."

She leaned wearily back in the cushioned chair, watching the woman, as she deftly selected the desired articles, with that listless, calm, unambitious air so strangely at variance with the piquant brilliancy she assumed on the stage. One by one she lifted the flowers and inhaled their fragrance; then, removing from the rest the tiny spray of geranium and tuberose, glanced casually at the card attached.

As if stung by a scorpion, she sprang from her chair, dashing her lapful of blossoms right and left.

Her voice was husky and had a far-away, unnatural sound that made the babe in its slumbers start, as if affrighted. Then, when the servant had obeyed, she sunk down again in her chair, a vivid, glowing spot of crimson on either cheek, and a bright intensity of light in her eyes.

Several minutes she sat there, patting her foot against the plushy pink carpet, the carmine on her cheeks fading to ashen pallor.

"And has it come to this, to this? Has he crossed my path again, just when I deemed my past life so nearly forgotten amid the excitement of the present? I am doomed, doomed to measure lances with this man—and why should I hesitate? I, who never slunk from—"

A shiver ran over her at some memory.

"I'll do it—the fates are leading me on, surely if slowly! Grace! my writing-desk!"

Calm, haughty, perfectly at ease as ever, she summoned the waiting attendant, and when her writing-desk was brought, hastily penned a message.

"If Mr. De Laurian desires the acquaintance of Miss Ethel Wyndham, he can learn her address of the manager. Miss Wyndham receives few calls, but will admit Mr. De Laurian upon one condition: that he consents to see her *en masque*."

"Take this to Manager Robbe, Grace, in the morning early; now, assist me to undress."

She retired to her bed, but sleep would not visit her eyes; she tossed restlessly to and fro, on the downy pillows, and then, in sheer despair of courting the drowsy god, arose, threw around her a white cashmere wrapper, and, in her bare, dimpled feet, commenced a long, restless promenade.

All through the early hours of that cold, gray autumn morning, she paced the floor; at times wrappen in deepest depression of spirits, and then the sad, worried look in her eyes chased suddenly away by one of bitter wrath and intensest agitation.

"It is impossible, utterly impossible! I thought, in this new, strange life, I had effectually overcome all the evil-heartedness of those other days, but it arises like a mighty avalanche when I think upon him! I hate him with an unearthly hatred! I fled from the temptation, and the temptation has followed me! The very finger of Fate has led him to me!"

She clasped her hands tightly together; the rings cutting into the throbbing flesh.

"I will do it! his very name has fired the worst passions of my heart! I dare declare I will do it, with that innocent, guileless babe sleeping under my very eyes! Yes, the hands that kidnapped Blanche's baby—that have never touched it but in tenderest care, shall seize on Gervaise De Laurian, who has followed me on to his doom!"

And then, when the brilliant eyes gleamed with all the intensity of her soul, and that strange, rare smile, so terrible, lingered on her coral-red lips, you knew it was Barbara Chetwynd to whom Gervaise De Laurian was being led, as she said, by the inscrutable hand of mysterious Destiny!

When the flashing morning broke, she had made her breakfast toilet; later, drove out, in her brougham with Grace and little "Zella," as she called baby Constanza; and when the air-

ing was over, and she returned to her rooms, a note waited her that, when she read, pale her cheeks for a second.

Then the proud light returned to her eyes.

"Grace, bring my *crepe* mask, and leave Zella in her cradle. When Mr. De Laurian rings, show him in, and retire."

She had scarcely given the directions when the summons came from the door.

She hastily adjusted the mask, threw a glowing scarlet opera cloak on her gray silk carriage costume, and bowed a cold, graceful greeting to Gervaise De Laurian.

"I can not tell you how grateful I am to you, Mrs. Wyndham, for your condescension in allowing me to pay my admiring respects to you in person."

She bowed gracefully in return for the implied compliment.

"I am a trifle surprised that you addressed me as 'Mrs.' How did you learn I was married?"

"Rumor said so. I beg pardon most humbly if I was mistaken. I can but envy the memory of the husband you were such a treasure to."

A little low laugh rippled behind the mask.

"All husbands are not appreciative, Mr. De Laurian."

"I can not imagine yours being otherwise. He would be a very brute."

"So I thought; will you close the window, please? I really think I am chilly."

De Laurian sprang to obey the languidly-uttered request, and when he returned, drew his chair closer to her side. She did not repulse the movement, and De Laurian, emboldened, took one of her hands in his. He felt it tremble slightly; had he known why! but he did not, and attributing it to reasons flattering to his conceit, he felt a thrill of joy in his veins, as he leaned nearer her.

"I regret you desire to hide your face from me, dear lady. Why not let me look and adore, as I did last night?"

"A nearer acquaintance might disenchant you, you know."

"Impossible! the memory of your beautiful face will haunt me forever. Can I not persuade you to unmask?"

His low, eager tones were almost whispered against her ear.

"Did you not know that everybody wears masques, Mr. De Laurian? Not of *crepe*, like this, to be sure, or perhaps not at all visible to human eyes. How am I to know you are what you appear?"

Although her words were earnest, her manner was light and jesting; but he could not see the terrible, momentarily kindling fires in her eyes.

"For instance," she went on, "when I am on the stage I am a masked woman. Beneath my smiles and gayety I hide more sorrow and shame than people dream of. Mine has been a bitter cup to drink; I have been through many deep waters, and Mr. De Laurian, you may not believe me, but I am thirsting for revenge!"

But what high tragedy am I indulging in? Come, away, my baby."

She arose from her chair and went across the floor to the cradle, where the child lay, awake and smiling.

De Laurian gave a casual look preparatory to the flattery he supposed expected from him.

Then he started; stared at the child, and turned abruptly back toward—

There she stood, in all her awful beauty—Barbara Chetwynd!

Transfixed with the suddenness of the shock, he could only stare wildly, and essay to gasp her name.

But the thunder of her voice rolled in his ears.

"We meet again, face to face, for the last time, Gervaise De Laurian! Look at me, for I am she! I look at the child, for it is Blanche Davenal's!"

For a moment only he recoiled in horror; then, his lips curling with contempt, would have left the room without another word.

But Barbara sprang before him with a high, shrill laugh.

"No, Gervaise De Laurian, I have sworn by all the powers of Hades that you do not escape me again! Once, twice, you baffled me, and this memory rankles still. Then when I had entered the house where that sleeping baby lay, while all was confusion and glad excitement below, and stole it to punish its mother, I vainly thought to expiate my sins by goodness and kindness to it. But, when you, unsought, came to my very door, all the devils in my soul clamored hungrily for vengeance. I will have my vengeance, Gervaise De Laurian, and you shall know what it is to be hunted down by the woman you disgraced, deserted!"

Her majestic form seemed to tower above him. He saw her eyes, flashing like a mad woman's. He heard the quick, low breathing; and then some bright object flashed from her bosom; a noise, a deadly horror—

And Gervaise De Laurian was launched on the Sea of Eternity!

He lay as he fell, graceful even in the rigidity of death, while Barbara looked grimly down at her work, reckless of the crowd surging up the stairs who had heard the shot; reckless of the terrified wailing of the baby in the cradle.

The door burst open; the excited crowd rushed in, and then Barbara started in affright.

She cast one look at the foremost figure, and with a cry of infinite agony, spoke his name.

"No! no! not Rex Chetwynd!"

Then, with the speed of a lightning flash, she snatched the tiny revolver, placed it against her temple, drew the trigger, and fell a corpse across Gervaise De Laurian's body!

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE MYSTERY NO MORE.

STRANGE as they seemed, Barbara Chetwynd's last words were true; it was indeed her husband, Rex Chetwynd, who had gone on his loving, hopeful task of finding, somewhere in the wide, wide world, the wife of his bosom whom he so worshipped, and, though against whom such awful calamities had been hurled, he could not believe so vile, so fiendish a creature.

From Chetwynd Chase he had wandered aimlessly westward; while in Chicago, he had picked up a London paper, and casually read the advertisement of the "charming Miss Wyndham."

With peculiar force, the similarity of a part of the name had occurred to him. His one object in life was to learn from Barbara's own lips her innocence or guilt, by which he would abide; this might be she; at any rate she was as likely to be in England as America, and he might as well follow this imaginary thread in the dreadful tangle as any.

So he sailed for Liverpool, and arrived in London several hours previous to the tragedy. He had at once gone to the manager of the Prince of Wales theater, and learned the address of Mrs. Ethel Wyndham, and was wondering as he mingled with the crowd that was constantly surging past her windows, how he would obtain an interview, in consequence of her not appearing for a fortnight on the boards.

At the very moment he passed her door, with slow steps, and scanning eyes, had come the pistol-shot, and the heavy fall, and the infant's shrill scream that alarmed the passers by, and foremost with the crowd, and side by side

with a policeman, he entered the room, in time to see, but powerless to prevent, the terrible closing of the tragedy.

It needed but a glance to recognize Gervaise De Laurian, and there came to him the awful suspicion that Barbara had added to her long catalogue of sins the heinous one of disloyalty to him.

His heart was bursting with anguish as he knelt beside the ill-starred pair; little did he dream how fearfully their vow had been kept, although made in mockery by the one, and earnest by the other, that "Death alone should part them."

The crowd stood back a moment, awed by his stony sorrow, as he softly smoothed her bright hair, and closed her heavily-lashed eyelids. Then, when the officer had kindly suggested him to retire, he mechanically walked to the cradle, where little Constanza lay, in terrified silence, her brown eyes raised in piteous, wistful entreaty, her tiny lips quivering with dread.

A fresh pang of anguish thrilled his very heart-strings. Barbara's child—and perhaps De Laurian's!

No, he would not harbor the thought. She was dead now, as well past any more sinning as repenting.

As he stood there, looking at the baby and hardly seeing it, came the passing thought of how different the home at Chetwynd Chase would be if this were Blanche's—and the thought suddenly suffocated him. Blanche's child! Might it not be Blanche's of a verity? De Laurian was supposed to have abducted it, and there lay De Laurian, dead.

In his feverish excitement, he called for the nurse of the child, and communicated his suspicions to the officer. Grace said the child was Mrs. Wyndham's, as far as she knew, and that she never had heard it called by any other name than Zella.

The officer inquired if there was any package of clothes anywhere that the actress looked special care of?

Grace said there was; a bundle locked up in a drawer that she never was allowed to open. She had seen Mrs. Wyndham often have it, but beyond the glimpse of something blue she did not know what it contained.

The drawer was broken open, under the officer's directions, and the package given to Mr. Chetwynd.

"Before I open it, as a proof that I am sure that child is my cousin's, I will describe its contents as advertised. There will be a blue silk sash fringed at the ends; an embroidered suit of underclothing; a lace ruffled robe; a pair of armlets, and a blanket, all marked C. D., the initials for Constanza Chetwynd Davenal."

The package was opened, and Mr. Chetwynd's list found complete, while, as though the "finger of Fate" had been as determined about this affair as Barbara had averred it was in another, there was a letter unsigned, undated, but unmistakably written in Barbara's hand. "Constanza's clothes, August 31st."

It was the very day of the event that had well-nigh killed Blanche, the day the "Pacific" arrived; the day Blanche had received her decree of divorce from Gervaise De Laurian.

Further proofs were not deemed necessary, and in a very few days the little one was formally given to Rex Chetwynd to take to its mother.

He secured the services of the colored woman, Grace, and took immediate passage home, having seen the last rites performed over the remains of the beautiful woman, who, with her headlong passions, her fiery temper, had inherited, to a terrible fatality, first, dishonor, then desertion, and finally death, the Curse of Chetwynd Chase.

The first gathering shades of Christmas Eve were falling over Chetwynd Chase; the lights were gleaming from window and hall as Rex Chetwynd drove up the leafless avenue to the home he was so going to bless, but from which the light and brightness was forever fled for him.

Rapidly the carriage containing its precious freight drove up, and reined in at the front entrance.

Bidding Grace remain where she was until he beckoned, Rex sprang out and ascended the steps.

The doors were not fastened at that early hour, and without any trouble he made his way to the dining-room, where he supposed the family were at dinner.

He was not mistaken; they were at dinner, and he was in their midst before any one saw him.

The greetings were quiet, but full of love and tenderness; and when each in turn had been embraced, he turned to Blanche.

"I have brought you a Christmas present; you will accept it?"

A wan little smile hovered for a moment on her lips. "Most assuredly, Rex; yes, I would ask no better present than to know you were happy once more."

A shade crossed his face as he answered very gently:

"I have but one request to make, for my Christmas gift. I will tell you, once for all, that Barbara is dead, and Gervaise De Laurian also sleeps his last sleep. I saw them both. When, or where, or how, never shall cross my lips, God willing. All I ask is, never mention it to me again."

A solemn, awe-struck silence fell on them; and God only knows the feeling of their hearts as they sat there, not crushed, but sorely hurt by the blow.

"But, let us cast aside gloomy thoughts. The past can not be recalled; and I am going to give Blanche her Christmas present."

He went to the window and beckoned to Grace, whom he met at the door, and divested of her burden.

With rapid, irregular steps he crossed the room to Blanche, who, with sudden, excited manner, had risen from her chair.

"Oh, Rex!—Rex!"

Her eager question, prompted by some wonderful instinct, died on her lips as Rex crossed the room to her, and laid the smiling, beautiful baby in her arms—her arms, her very own!

"We leave them to their rapturous ecstasy on that never-to-be-forgotten Christmas Eve, when, by the same hand that led Blanche through such raging waters, she was brought to a great, glorious light that never was dimmed again by the shadow even of the Curse of Chetwynd Chase!"

THE END.

Field Sports and Pastimes.

BY HENRY CHADWICK.

THE RED STOCKING RECORD.

At the request of several correspondents we give below the record of the Red Stockings of Cincinnati, for 1889, their champion year, when they passed through the season without a single defeat.

They played before a total of 179,500 persons by a close computation. The largest audience was in their game with the Athletics, of Philadelphia, on the grounds of the latter, it being fair to estimate that inside and around the grounds there were over fifteen thousand people.

May 4, Great Western, Cin., at Cincinnati..... 39 9
May 10, Kekionga, Ft. Wayne, Ind., at Cincinnati..... 66 8
May 15, Antioch, Yellow Springs, O., at Cin. natl..... 41 7
May 22, Kekionga, Ft. Wayne, Ind., at Ft. Wayne..... 41 7
June 1, Independent, Chty., at Mansfield..... 43 14
June 2, Forest City, Cleveland, O., at Cleveland..... 25 6
June 3, Niagara, Buffalo, N. Y., at Buffalo..... 42 6
June 4, Alert, Rochester, N. Y., at Rochester..... 18 9
June 5, Union, Lansingburg, N. Y., at Lansingburg..... 38 31
June 8, National, Albany, N. Y., at Albany..... 49 8
June 9, Mutual, Springfield, Mass., at Springfield..... 50 5
June 10, Lowell, Boston, Mass., at Boston..... 39 9
June 11, Tri-Mountain, Boston, Mass., at Boston..... 40 12
June 12, Harvard, Boston, Mass., at Boston..... 30 11
June 15, Mutual, New York, at New York..... 4 2
June 16, Atlantic, Brooklyn, at Brooklyn..... 32 10
June 17, Eckford, New York, at New York..... 24 5
June 18, Irvington, Irvington, N. J., at Irvington..... 20 4
June 19, Olympic, Philadelphia, at Philadelphia..... 32 11
June 21, Athletic, Philadelphia, at Philadelphia..... 27 18
June 22, Keystone, Philadelphia, at Philadelphia..... 45 39
June 23, Maryland, Baltimore, Md., at Baltimore..... 47 7
June 25, National, Washington, at Washington..... 24 8
June 26, Olympic, Washington, at Washington..... 16 5
July 3, Olympic, Washington, at Cincinnati..... 25 14
July 5, Olympic, Washington, at Cincinnati..... 32 10
July 10, Forest City, Rockford, Ill., at Rockford..... 34 13
July 12, Olympic, Washington, at Cincinnati..... 19 7
July 13, Eckford, Cincinnati, at Cincinnati..... 31 15
July 24, Forest City, Rockford, at Cincinnati..... 15 14
July 30, Cream City, Milwaukee, at Milwaukee..... 35 7
July 31, Forest City, Rockford, at Chicago..... 53 32
Aug. 1, Forest City, Rockford, at Rockford..... 32 7
Aug. 4, Central City, Syracuse, N. Y., at Cin. natl..... 37 9
Aug. 5, Central City, Syracuse, N. Y., at Cin. natl..... 38 29
Aug. 6, Forest City, Cleveland, O., at Cincinnati..... 43 27
Aug. 11, Riverside, Portsmouth, N. H., at Portsmouth..... 40 10
Aug. 16, Eckford, New York, at Cincinnati..... 22 4
Aug. 23, Southern, New Orleans, La., at Cin. natl..... 33 8
Aug. 26, Union, Lansingburg, N. Y., at Cincinnati..... 17 17
Aug. 31, Eckford, Cincinnati, O., at Cincinnati..... 34 31
Sept. 2, Alert, Rochester, N. Y., at Cincinnati..... 22 19
Sept. 9, Olympic, Pittsburg, Pa., at Cincinnati..... 54 2
Sept. 15, Union, St. Louis, Mo., at St. Louis..... 31 14
Sept. 16, Empire, St. Louis, Mo., at St. Louis..... 31 14
Sept. 23, Eagle, San Francisco, Cal., at San Francisco..... 35 4
Sept. 27, Eagle,

THE TIE IS BROKEN.

BY L. C. GREENWOOD.

Never more shall clasping hands
Feel sweet thrills of Love;
Never, dreaming eyes behold
Visions from above.
Never shall this hand hold thine,
Never more be spoken;
I must bid thee, love, farewell,
For the tie is broken!

Never more in fond embrace
Heart to heart shall call;
Never lips once warm with love
Tender words let fall.
Sadly do I from thee part
With my first love's token,
Sorrow will be my requital—
For the tie is broken!

Though we may not meet again
In Love's fervent bliss,
Though the quivering lips that sigh,
Feel no more its kiss,
Fidelity still will be light—
Farewell now is spoken,
And two hearts asunder torn,
For the tie is broken!

How a Love-Dream Ended.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"You are pretty—very pretty, Maggie."

Florie Ernest was looking with big, admiring eyes at Maggie Winfield's sweet face, and delicate figure that was rendered doubly attractive by the bright pink silk dress, with black lace overwaist and skirt.

"Am I, Florie? I must be if such a truthful little girl as yourself says it. Seriously, though, I know I am pretty. I know I look better in pink with a relief of black than in any thing else. I know there is no way I can arrange my hair so becomingly as this Pompadour and a low coil; so do you dream for a moment that, knowing all this, I shall fail to impress it upon—Mr. Sydney Florerstan?"

There was a ring of triumph in Maggie's clear, high voice, and a sparkle in her eyes, as she pronounced his name.

"Yes," said Florie, thoughtfully; "I suppose he is a great catch. But I prefer Albert Verener to Mr. Florerstan with all his riches."

Maggie's lip curled—the idea of contrasting the two gentlemen was almost ridiculous; and yet—she remembered the time not a year back, when Al Verener was the most devoted of all her friends. But when this rich, fashionable Mr. Florerstan suddenly stepped on the scene, and at once was captivated by Maggie's pretty ways, why, what more natural than that Maggie should turn Al over to the good graces of some less favored girl—cousin Florie Ernest, for instance? Piqued by Maggie's cool disposal of him, Al went desperately to work to make Florie fall in love with him, little realizing that her sweet, pure face, with its tender eyes fairly luminous with wine-brown light, might induce many a clearer-headed man than his own precious self to lose his heart.

And winsome Florie Ernest? What thought she of this lover so suddenly flung to her from Maggie Winfield's dainty, overflowing hands—the same hands that had flung so many morsels of this world's goods to her since she had come from her quiet country home to visit Maggie?

At first, with something of distrust in Maggie, with not a little of disgust for Al Verener that he could so conveniently transfer his love from one to another, Florie repelled coldly her lover's advances—until, when his really fine face had won on her a little, she learned to rather enjoy his society, and then believe him when he told her he never really cared for Miss Maggie.

So the little drama went briskly on. Florie loving Al Verener more and more—yet still not as her woman's heart might have done—and Maggie striving with all her art to bring Mr. Sydney Florerstan to her feet.

She had him almost where she wanted him; he was her most devoted; he brought her such elegant flowers, and told her all about his palace home, and what was in it; and she actually asked her what colored lining she would prefer for a park phaeton, if she had one.

Then, when Maggie clasped her two pretty white hands together in childish ecstasy and declared how enraptured she would be if she had a park phaeton, with dark olive trimmings, she felt sure she had him, park phaeton, olive trimmings and all.

Only—Sydney could not, or would not, be brought to the proposing point. Then Maggie, so sure of him, and so impatient that she was not surer, resolved on a bold stroke to accomplish her ends.

Yes—there was Al Verener—why not flirt with him again? She had been too constant to her wealthy suitor; she would show him that, beside him, there were other men in the world who wanted her. Of course Al wanted her—Florie Ernest notwithstanding; and she inwardly resolved to make Mr. Florerstan so jealous that he would secure her at once.

And of Florie—she never thought. And granting it did hurt Florie a little, what of it? Hadn't Maggie been leading Florie with benevolence for months, and would not the law of compensation permit her to take something in return?

So, Florie's cheeks daily grew paler, and the luminous light in her wine-brown eyes seemed extinguished in a peculiar, wistful, perplexed look.

Innocent little country girl that she was, the strange ways of fashionable life were forever puzzling her; yes, now positively paining her.

Mr. Al Verener fairly jumped back to Maggie, despite the fact that Sydney Florerstan was possessed of infinitely more worldly attractions than himself. He actually thought, poor, silly fellow, that Maggie relented, and had taken him into favor again. But suppose Al walked into the trap Maggie had set to catch Sydney Florerstan?—Maggie laughed to herself in the glass in her bedroom, and decided it would be real fortunate if he did, for then, when she told Mr. Florerstan, in such close confidence, of an offer she had had, and of course refused, why, he must be obtuse indeed not to discern how near on the end of her tongue was the "yes" she imagined he feared was not forthcoming.

At first, Sydney did not seem at all discomposed by Maggie's flirtation with Al Verener; then, at times, his face would wear a cloud that delighted Miss Winfield; and one day, he openly asked Maggie if Mr. Verener was aware of the mischief he was doing?

"Mischief?" and Maggie raised her radiant face to Sydney's with the quaintest possible expression in her blue velvety eyes. Now, surely it was on the *tip*.

"Yes, decidedly mischief. Can he not see, can you not see, that he is treating Miss Ernest most scandalously?"

"Oh!" returned Maggie, dubiously, for he had said what she least expected. He had noticed that deceitful little Florie's long face, had he, instead of her own? Very well; Florie was wanted at home now very much. It was coming on planting-time, and—

As Maggie thought of that, a malicious little spite seized her.

"I wonder Miss Ernest can take it so to

heart, as you think. A girl who can plant potatoes, and drop corn, barefooted, ought hardly to be appreciative of much sentiment."

Sydney understood her covert sneer better than she thought he could; and, to her surprise, instead of blushing at the rural allusion, and appearing shocked at Florie's want of refinement, he started up in his chair, delightedly.

"Is it possible Miss Ernest is such a sensible girl? My pleasantest recollections are of homely farm life with a dear mother and sisters. I must find our deserted little country girl and let her entertain me while you and Mr. Verener finish 'Maud Muller.'"

He sauntered off, down the shady garden walk to the grape-arbor where Florie generally took her work, or a book, these warm summer days.

And Maggie watched him with an undefined fear around her heart, and wondered it—if—

How she hated "Maud Muller," and Florie, and Al Verener!

The late autumn days had come, flinging their golden, and scarlet, and royal purple pennons on the clear, crisp air.

In her country home Florie had been over a month now, forgetting Al Verener as fast as possible. Like a true, sensible girl as she was, she decided not to waste a moment of worry on a man so utterly unworthy of her, who so fully justified her first impressions of him. Away from the undeniable charm of his handsome face, she soon severed the slight fetters that bound her, only to rejoice anew in her freedom.

She and Sydney Florerstan were good friends. He had run down to the farm a number of times, and seemed remarkably well acquainted with her family, and talked freely of Maggie and her beauty. Somehow his praise of her always wounded Florie; some how, she found herself learning to wait and watch for his coming, to listen to his voice with a strange delirium of joy; and then Florie deliberately declared to herself that Sydney—she even called him Sydney, as he asked her to—should come no more. He was so nearly her cousin—Maggie's husband!

Meanwhile Maggie Winfield was trifling with Al Verener, until she brought him—her bait—into the trap. He asked her, in eager tones, one warm October night, when they stood alone, she supposed—on the piazza, to take pity on him, and let him call her his own.

Then Maggie laughed gleefully; not on purpose, for she tried to mask her triumphant delight, even if her sweet voice did jar on her own ears.

"Oh, Al, I am so sorry! I thought we were such dear good friends! I always wanted a brother so, and I am sure I regarded you as one."

His white face and pallid lips told how much of a brother he had regarded himself; and, for once, Maggie positively admired him as he answered her.

"What did you mean, then, by your behavior? Do sisters generally charm their brothers so? What did you mean, Maggie Winfield?"

She shrunk back a step.

"Don't scold me, Al. I never dreamed of this. How could I? When I am engaged to Mr. Florerstan, too?"

He uttered some faint sound, and then a clear, scornful voice suddenly startled them.

"I beg pardon, Miss Winfield. Did I understand you to say you were engaged to me?"

"Poor Maggie! but her indomitable will made a struggle to escape with her from the scene of this inglorious, doubly inglorious defeat."

"Oh, Mr. Florerstan, how you alarmed me! I think you misunderstood me; I said, or certainly meant to say, that as Mr. Verener and Florie were betrothed—"

The quiet, sarcastic smile on his face compelled her to pause in the midst of her fabrication.

"Allow me to correct you again, Miss Ernest is no more engaged to Mr. Verener—whom I pity from my very soul; and he extended his hand in warm sympathy to Al, who stood amazed, "than I am to you, Miss Winfield. And my proof is here."

He handed her a square envelope, that she took in a dream. She had had need to open it; she knew they announced—those monogrammed, white-corded cards—that Florie Ernest would marry Sydney Florerstan.

What a pretty name it would be—Florie Florerstan! but he got her olive trimmings for her park phaeton?—the idea of a park phaeton for a girl who dropped corn!

Sydney's voice dispelled her momentary reverie; she started so that the cards fell from her nerveless hands—even as her hopes fell from her reach, forever!

Florie sent her love, and begs you will be at the wedding. I shall be glad to see you, Miss Winfield. Shall I bid you good-night?"

A courtly bow—receding footsteps—unbroken silence.

And so Maggie Winfield's love-dream ended.

Remarkable Precocity.—Precocious children are not rare, but it is a fact that they are short-lived. The mental being appears to have anticipated the bodily development and life, and outlives it essentially, so that the bodily energies fail to keep up and finally expire by premature strain and exhaustion.

The annals of precocity present no more remarkable instance than the career of Christian Heinecker, born at Lubec, Feb. 5th, 1731. At the age of ten months he could speak and repeat every word which was said to him; when twelve months old, he knew by heart the principal events narrated in the Pentateuch; in his second year he learned the greater part of the Old and New Testaments; in his third year he learned to speak Latin and French; in his fourth year he employed himself in the study of religion and the history of the church, and he was able not only to repeat what he had read, but also to reason upon it and express his own judgment. The king of Denmark, wishing to see this wonderful child, he was taken to Copenhagen, there examined before the court, and proclaimed to be a perfect wonder. On his return home, he learned to write, but his constitution being weak, he shortly after fell ill; he died on the 27th of June, 1735, without, it is said, showing much weakness at the approach of death. This account of him by his teacher is confirmed by many respectable contemporary authorities. Martini published a dissertation at Lubec, in which he attempts to account for the circumstances of the child's early development of intellect.

A precocious child is not a matter of pride. If a little one is old and "smart" beyond its years, the parents' first and last effort should be to arrest that precocity—not to encourage it. If the child is to live and act well in its part in life, it must have a strong frame and firm health, and every conceivable means should be adopted to attain these in the case of all children who know at five years what, in the natural order of things, they should only know at twenty.

A TAILOR'S apprentice, who seemed to be pained a good deal with the cross-leg attitude, was asked how he liked tailoring, to which he replied, "Very well; but I believe I shall never be able to stand sitting!"

Coral and Ruby:

THE RETRIBUTION OF A LIFE-TIME.

BY MRS. JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.

AUTHOR OF "ADINA, THE ADOPTED," "STRANGELY WED," "CECIL'S DECEIT," "MADAME DURAND'S PROTEGE," "THE FALSE WIDOW," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXI.

BREAKING THE TOOLS.

"You're a jewel, Lisette; a crown jewel, for that matter, and the only one that crazy old governor of yours ever had under his eyes. Never mind, my darling; there's no malice prepossession in that." (Miss Lang always put on an injured air with any reference to the crown jewel.) "It's all right, my charmer, you're giving me a better push along the flowery road to success than a dozen crown jewels would be apt to do; dangerous ornaments to handle they might prove to be, you see. So Miss Coral's taken a French leave of the sorrowing parents, and given the lurch to the lover who, failing to secure the first edition, was on time laying claim to the second? Hard on our *savant*, after all his constancy. Who's at the bottom of it all now, do you suppose, my pretty Lisette?"

"Why should any one be at the bottom of it more than a silly girl's whim? And that's apt to be empty as your gallantries, Mr. Wing."

"Now, my darling, let not those old suspicious rise, and all that sort of thing. We're sure to quarrel if you go to doubting me, Lisette; men are such obstinate dunderheads, they will assert themselves at the chance of clapping an extinguisher on their own best hopes in life. I did it, like a fool, once, and I'm confounded certain to go at loggerheads if I should find you doubting in the old way again. A dozen years of celibacy when I might have found matrimonial felicity—ah! modesty forbids me mentioning the number of times—had ought to assure you how abiding was the deeply-rooted sentiment of old. Don't provoke that, unfortunate mulish obstinacy, I beg, Lisette; it may be more my fault than my misfortune, but we should deal gently with each other's faults, you know."

For once Mr. Wing's plaintive pathos was lost upon its object. The thin, sorrow face of the companion did not relax its grim expression.

"It's time we came to some definite understanding, Julius. I want to know what your intentions are before either you or I take another step in the affair we're following. If you're meaning to give me the slip as you did once before, there's little encouragement to keeping you informed of all that goes on in the house. I'd better take the time myself, and the profits when they come."

"Absurd, my own! When we who share the work share its results as well."

"It's well enough to say," Miss Lang pursued, doggedly, "I want some better assurance, though. I ask again, what are your intentions in regard to me, Julius?"

"You surprise—you pain me to the heart! I did not deem it possible, Lisette—"

"Will you or will you not give me a reply?" Surely that was the obstinacy of old speaking through Miss Lang's unusual address, the spirit of mastery before which, clever as he was—uncommitted as he believed himself, the lawyer involuntarily quailed.

"What in the name of all that's gracious do you want me to say, then?" It was Mr. Wing's turn to assume an injured air.

"I want you to tell me, in so many words, what relation exists between you and I—that to avoid any evasions hereafter."

"If you suspect me of meaning any thing of the sort, how can words of mine assure you? Once distrust, always distrust; you know; if I had a mind to deceive you—if I might as well be hanged for a mutinous as a lambkin, and swear to any thing you've a mind to ask of me. What relation but that of loving *fiancés* could I sustain, my own; what but the happiness of a life together charms me to a contemplation of the misty future?"

Evidently the approach his tone conveyed had its effect at last. Miss Lang dropped her self-assertion for a manner humbly deprecating.

"That was the inference, of course, Julius, but I fancied you avoided promising in unmistakable words to make me your wife. I really wish you would do it now, just to do away with the fancy, you know."

"Hang it all!" turned Mr. Wing, inwardly. "I'll be glad enough to get done with all this ogling of the old harridan. It was bad enough in the 'palmy days'—decidedly unpleasant now; but for the sake of the little stake in hand, here goes!"

"Serious omission, 'pon my word it is. As if it could make such a deal of difference what words I put my proposal in! Just as you like to have it, of course. Did you hear any thing?"

Miss Lang, without rising, had reached back and opened a door near which she was sitting. They were together in the sewing-room, where their interviews had come to be regularly held.

"Only the cat," she answered. "Pussy! pussy!" A sleek gray grimaldin came purring through the doorway. "I shouldn't like Pussy to be found in the housekeeper's room."

"It's time I came to the rescue if you're cultivating a liking for beasts of that sort—that's an old maid's prerogative, I believe."

"You were about to ask me, Julius—"

"I was about to ask you, Miss Lang! I put the intention into execution, the question into shape, with all the delight the occasion induces. Will you bestow upon me the superlative happiness of that fair hand—will you be my wife very, very soon, and put an end to all this misunderstanding, suspicion and suspense?"

"Very soon, Julius." Her calm tones cut into the flourish of rhetoric with which he meant to impress her, clipping it hopelessly short.

"I'll bring you an engagement-ring, then, if you like, when I come again. And soon as convenient after that, the other one, with which ring 'I will thee well,' and all the rest of it. I really think you ought to be satisfied with that, Lisette. How nervous you are all at once."

She had stirred again to pull close the door, which had been swinging ajar.

"Then it must be that uncertainty has worn upon my nerves," she answered, meekly. "I don't want to reproach you, Julius; it was only the draught striking me, then, but I've had just such chills, fearing you meant to play me false a second time."

"Lord temper the wind to you presently, then," was Mr. Wing's private reflection. "Such a charming 'shon lamb' as you'll make, my gullible Lisette!"

Something very different he murmured in her ear, and took a speedy leave. Miss Lang saw him out, gave a vicious look at the cat purring about her feet, and turning, opened the door which seemed to engross her attention in the few minutes past. She passed through this time into the housekeeper's room. The presiding deity of the place, who in all reason might have been supposed to be occupied somewhere else at that time of the morning

sat in silent state, with the butler, equally silent, as a *vis-a-vis*.

"You both heard?" Miss Lang asked.

"We both heard very distinctly, Miss Lang. He shall not treat you shabbily as you have told us again, if our evidence will prevent."

The housekeeper answered. "Mr. Jacobs quite agrees with me in the view I take of the matter."

Mr. Jacobs, who was known to stand in decided awe of the important official, gave his corroboration to the statement with hearty assurance.

It was two days after, that Mrs. Harland stood within the library face to face with the haggard, harassed master of the mansion. A cloud was awake under her own hard exterior, which one might have supposed would soften her strong hatred with at least a little pitying compunction for all she had caused him to suffer.

But, she was bitter to the last, determined to add the final drop which would cause his cup of misery to overflow. The promise she had given, Coral was easily kept since the strong blow she purposed to deal him was not withheld by it.

"I have come to resign my position in your household, Mr. Stuyvesant. Let me hope that in my *role* of chaperone I have given as much satisfaction as the faithful performance of the duties pertaining has afforded me. We shall leave your house in the course of a day or two."

"Ruby and I. You scarcely look relieved, Boyd, and I laid no such flattering unction to my soul!" as to suppose you could possibly regret our flitting."

"Margray, had you any part in my child's flight from home and us? Did you cause that, and is this going of yours meant to leave me in the worse intolerance of suspense?"

"It is not probable I should care to influence her to that. It is not what I planned for her, and I have withdrawn the alternative, which might have prompted me to a further consideration of her future. I might not be so lenient now if I thought you would be any the happier."

"In Heaven's name, Margray, is there to be no truce to the war you wage against me? What is it you are threatening now, after your open avowal that enmity should cease at last—the persecutions of enmity, rather? That has reached me, as you doubtless intended it should, you stooping to add falsehood at last—turning upon me a charge of treachery?"

"Brutus did not love Caesar less, but Rome more! You are answered, Boyd. I hate you no less, I wish you no better fate than the worst that could befall, but I love my own child more. At Ruby's pleading, and for Ruby's sake, that pitiful story of love and despair and hate shall never be made public; the revenge I contemplated shall even fall short of the mark I have had in view since almost the day when I confronted you first with the truth. You can guess what that was with the light of the last two months' experience, and the object I have ceased to importune. I wanted you to suffer the keenest through the child of the rival who supplanted me; more than that, to visit the suffering on her as well. It would have been accomplished had she been forced into that unloving union which was proposed; the torture of loving and being bound to another is more acute than you supposed, or you would scarcely have joined your plea in advancing it—and she would have been spared nothing of the misery you hoped to avert."

Her cold tones had measured themselves to the form of a recital. Both were standing; she, stern and still, aloof from any object, self-reliant and alone as she had held herself in the steady course she had followed; Mr. Stuyvesant leaning against the wall, the bowed figure of a broken, miserable man.

"You would not have supposed that I would waver at the very last; I would not have thought myself two months ago. But natural affections are strong, and Ruby's future shall not be marred by a knowledge of my past; to keep it a sealed book from her knowledge shall be spared the world. The name she bears is ignominious to the one which is rightfully hers, and she could take no joy from a relation which you would so gladly disavow. I leave you, but I will never permit my claim to be shaken off; your life shall continue to its end the same hollow mockery it has been, with the addition of the last and deepest pang I shall send home to you. I never will be forgiving, and I spare you nothing my own more selfish interest does not prompt."

"To spare the child of your love a bitter and fasting humiliation you would have sacrificed her love and her future; I have been more merciful in dealing her a kinder blow, which will recoil upon you with a more painful effect, but from which she will recover—youth is so elastic and so hopeful. Coral knows the truth—the long-guarded secret of your blighted life, the stain of shame which all your endeavors can never remove from her."

More deadly anguish could not well be depicted upon human countenance than was stamped upon Boyd Stuyvesant's face then. The blow, to avert which he had yielded the brave resistance that could have tempted little worse, had fallen in spite of all. Fallen, too, upon Coral in her weak helplessness, without his great love to break its force or to plead his own exculpation.

A coward may be nerved to simulated bravery through desperation; a brave man may be stricken into cowardice by force of a calamity he has no power to stay. He was all unnerved at thought of the girl about whom his fondest affections had woven themselves, shrinking alone under the misery of that revelation. His white lips worked with a dry twitching, which emitted no sound, and there was a hopelessly dazed look settling over his face.

Watching him, the woman who had haunted him so relentlessly, felt a cold chill creeping through her. Was he going to fall in a fit? She had known of such happenings through smaller causes than this. Her voice rung out, more sharply than its careful modulation often admitted:

"Boyd! Great heavens, Boyd! what has come over you?"

The gray emotionate face with horror-dulled eyes holding hers with a kind of stony fascination was to be the specter which should haunt her, sleeping or waking, through the rest of her life. He had implored her before that, he had more than once all but mastered her with the strength of defiance, which was a little lacking for the helplessness of those he loved—never such an agony of dumb reproach. She knew afterward what that look meant, what thought, sweeping with stunning and irresistible force through his brain, was reflected in it.

It seemed an age before she could draw her eyes away, and looking beyond, saw what gave her a start and went far to dissipate the dread which had fallen upon her. A curtain, swept hastily aside, disclosed the wiry little figure and ferret-face of Mr. Julius Wing. It must have been that Mrs. Harland's terror had unsettled the steady and dignified composure which was the result of nearly twenty years' training; and that some of the fierce, unreasoning spirit which had swayed her, to the utter weariness of the man who threw off the tyrannical hold she had asserted, revived in her then.

With two forward steps she confronted him, a swift crimson sweeping over her face, and her eyes blazing anger upon him.

"You pitiful, eavesdropping pettifogger! Is this the way you repay the generosity which has raised you up? Down upon your knees, you miserable little wretch, and swear that you will not reveal one word of all that you have overheard. Down, I say!"

All the bravado went out of the lawyer's face, but he had just sense enough left to ward off the threatening aspect she presented before him.

"Mr. Stuyvesant, madame! Look at Mr. Stuyvesant!"

Mr. Stuyvesant had staggered weakly forward, clutching at a table, over which one hand was blindly groping, and he was sinking slowly into a chair, standing there, his face turned still in the direction of the empty space where she had stood a moment before. Mr. Wing was beside him in the lapse of a breath, whipping out his brandy-flask with an expedition which was due more to the fury he had just escaped than any especial presence of mind of his own.

"Looks like an epileptic fit," he said. "Apt to go hard if it is. Better ring for help, Mrs. Harland."

But, before she had stirred, the liquid fire went coursing in a great gulp down the stricken man's throat, and he threw up a deprecating hand.

"Don't," he said, huskily. "Don't call in witnesses to my misery. If you have any pity, leave me to face it out alone."

The first spasm was over, and they could see it was no more than intense agony of mind which had overcome the power of the body to resist, but the danger was past of the fit they had both apprehended. Only such emotion!

It is a blessing where such intensity of hopeless misery does break down physical resistance. Either the body yields, or the mind resists through chaotic spaces, which act separately and contradictorily upon the reasoning sense until the power to reason is obscurely vague, or passes quite. To that must be attributed Mr. Stuyvesant's subsequent course.

The other two withdrew with a lingering reluctance on either part; Mrs. Harland's arising from awakened anxiety, the little lawyer's from a decidedly unpleasant sensation at thought of finding himself alone with her after that first angry outburst. He was rallying courage, and putting down outward signs of his inward quaking as he crossed the corridor and passed into the business room, where his was no unfamiliar presence. It was not reassuring for him to know that she followed him closely, but his fear of a repetition of former violence was quickly dissipated.

"Let me suggest, Mr. Wing, that the painful scene you chanced to witness be permitted to pass from your mind speedily, at least so far as the thought of taking advantage of any knowledge you may have gained shall occur. Such magnanimous consideration on your part will not fail to be well rewarded."

"The reward of an approving conscience, Mrs. Harland. A confidence so unwillingly gained I would scorn to betray."

"A tiger cat," he thought, as he watched her disappear. "Trust me to her claws when I can avoid it. It's to be hoped the Ruby don't possess the maternal temper; it has never been developed, I am positive. What our ex-star, La Fontaine, might say to my trip up among the Alleghenies, and its result, I shudder to think; what my queen Ruby thinks shall soon be tested, if I succeed in gaining audience with the coy divinity. Deuced unpleasant for my patron saint, Stuyvesant, as I understand the affair, but mum is the word while I twist the information I have into its most effective shape. The reward of my conscience, too, is something."

With a suppressed chuckle, Mr. Wing went his way to the parlors, quite empty of human presence all that day until his entrance. Once or twice he walked the whole length of the triple apartment, his brows knit in a vain attempt to elucidate the problem, puzzling him—how gain audience with Ruby?

And Lisette's confounded suspicions would make it awkward if she got an inkling," he mused. "Ah-h!"

The flange card-case and the name on the top caught his eye like a sudden inspiration. He took up the card—Tracy's, which Ruby had dropped there—lightly penciling. "Immediate and alone" on the other side. He dispatched that to her by a sharp rattle under-footman who had once or twice been bribed as an ally in different dodges, which the lawyer had found convenient to practice in that house, and who repeated glibly that "the gentleman seemed in a dreadful hurry, and particuliar, suah."

A glow and a shivering came together into Ruby's face.

"I have prayed to see him again," she murmured, "and now something seems to warn me against it."

The undefined warning had no effect to deter her from descending at once. An indignant flush came over her face as she encountered Mr. Wing alone in the parlors, and understood the subterfuge he had used.

"It was my only chance of seeing you," he said, with the air of an humble penitent, but with a yellow gleam coming into his small, restless eyes, "and I've come on business of the greatest importance to you."

"Business, Mr. Wing?" The tone was chilling in the extreme.

"I have said it, Miss Harland. It's like running across one of those persons you so often see, unexpectedly addressed to one's self, with the indefinite promise held out of learning something to one's advantage. You couldn't guess where I've been of late—up to a romantically gloomy old place which ought to be haunted if it isn't, and that is called Crag's Peak."

A little flitting shade of annoyance went over her face as she motioned him to proceed.

"Confine yourself simply to your business, Mr. Wing. I scarcely feel equal to any lengthened interview—least of all, one without an agreeable feature."

"And every strong sensation loses when compressed to brief limits; but your wife, by all means, in the matter. I was looking at the old portraits up there, but I failed to find that of a deceased Harland of this generation; and I had been told that the entire line was represented there. Will you kindly describe your father to me, Miss Ruby?"

"You digress, sir. If there is nothing more important to detain me I will do myself the pleasure of leaving you."

"Perhaps you would like me to describe him to you, then; perhaps you would not be wholly averse to having him presented in *propria persona*, after the fashion of stage papes, who come on in the last act to pronounce 'Bless you, my daughter!' Have I really succeeded in interesting you? Then let me exhibit to you a trophy I brought away from that dimly delightful ancestral domain of yours. See, a copy of the Record of Births from the family Bible I found there, guarded under lock and key, and a Gramp

"Stop, sir!" Ruby interrupted, an ominous flash in her eyes. "You have been guilty of an unpardonable intrusion for which you shall answer to my mother at once. Your impertinence will be received with the attention it merits, I have not a doubt."

She was crossing with uplifted hand to the bell-pull, but he threw himself ahead, and with a stroke of his penknife severed the cord.

"It may be pleasant for your ears alone to hear the story than to have it told in presence of the whole household around. You have not treated me very kindly, Miss Harland. You have been deuced overbearing, if you'll allow me to say it, and I am going to repay all your haughtiness with more consideration than you might expect. You were kind enough to compare me with a dog, not many weeks ago, and you shall see how faithfully devoted the dog can be, notwithstanding the kicks and cuffs and general misusage he has received."

There was an underlying sneer in the lawyer's speech which her proudly-sensitive spirit resented. Seeing that he was determined to be heard, she stood silently, scornfully awaiting whatever he might have to reveal, not deigning to hasten him by a question.

"I am forced to go back to the subject one not acquainted with the facts would suppose to be of a gratifying nature rather than otherwise—you Harlands, from time immemorial, have been so distinguished for class pride. Will you tell me what you have heard of that unknown, mysterious progenitor of yours?"

"Easily answered, Mr. Wing. I know nothing—absolutely nothing of my father, except that he died before my birth."

"Pitiful case, to escape the felicity of knowing such a daughter!" that covert sneer still perceptible. "I am led to suppose that such questions as you may have put regarding him have been evaded cleverly as only such a clever actress as Mademoiselle La Fontaine could evade them."

"What motive you have in view, why you have troubled yourself to ferret out the secrets of our house, that of my mother's professional character included, is doubtless intensely personal to you; and any interest of Mr. Wing's can have no weight with me. Consult with that confederate of your promising discoveries—the pitiful creature Lang, who is such a worthy accomplice of such a principal, and find mutual consolation if you can for failing to overwhelm me by the magnitude of the 'tea-pot' tempest' you probably expected to arouse."

"You are over-hasty, Miss Harland, when you so malign my motive. And you put me off the track, which is unfortunate, while you have the inappreciable taste to be impatient. Let me speedily set you right regarding a couple of erroneous ideas you manifestly entertain. Your father did not die before the happy occasion of your nativity—your mother was never so fortunate to possess a right to any except the family name you bear. It's a delicate subject to touch upon, my dear young lady; a case of 'loving not wisely, but too well.' Looks never kill, my charming Ruby, not even such piercingly brilliant darts as your glorious orbs emit. Blame yourself, if blame there be, for having revealed to you this not-unparalleled *morceau*—what shall we call it?—youthful indiscretion, little misfortune which leaves its blot on an honorable name. I always meant to repay you for your scorn of me, but I scarcely hoped for such a means of humbling that proud will of yours. You, beautiful and accomplished, and haughty as one of Lucifer's angels, are the offspring of a disgraceful *raison*, in mention of which angels of purity would blush and tremble; before which you pale and shrink like the miserable creature it declares you to be."

Every trace of color had faded out of her face; her very breath seemed to have died upon her lips. The horror of the dilated eyes fixed upon him never saw the mean triumph of his insolent regard of her; like a scroll unrolled the anguish-giving revelation seemed stretched there before her—the meaning of her presence in that house, her claim upon Mr. Stuyvesant's liberality, the bitter hate and the revenge which had been her mother's unwavering object since her first knowledge of her, were all like tangible realities which she comprehended rightly for the first. It seemed like an hour—it was probably a minute—before the lawyer's voice broke silence again.

"Some men with such a vantage ground gained might put it to me as to whether I shall do. Love's sacrifice, the merit of true forgiveness, and the like, leaves me wonderfully considerate. Not every man would sacrifice ambitious prospects to renew the proposal which I have made you twice—but for the third time shall be the very last. Choose the inevitable, my charming Ruby. You would not make a patient subject for the world to sneer at, and unless you leave me my plighted bride, I swear that the whole shameful story shall ring through all Richmond before to-morrow night. The reputedly wealthy ward of the famed lawyer was far above mating with the poor practicing dog of an attorney; does the daughter of the adventures, whose record might show more foul blots than the one, disdain to acknowledge her master? A very gentle and loving master, unless you drive me to the use of harsh measures to break that proud, rebellious will of yours."

"My master—your bride!" Before the withering, hissing scorn of the voice, which was little more than a whisper, the lawyer writhed, enraged, but covering in his little narrow soul at the intensity of still passion in the marble-like face and suppressed tone. "Tell it if you dare—if you dare!" Not that, not any power on earth, could break my will to yours. Let that miserable lying tongue of yours repeat one word of all you have just now told to me, and, truth or falsehood, you shall go down into the very dust to eat your own insolent words."

She was turning with a gesture of disgust and aversion when, in the arch of the further doorway, she caught sight of her mother's form. The lawyer saw the still, tall figure at the same moment, and beyond her something that changed his angry bravado to the crestfallen, baffled look he had worn once before in these very rooms when he was brought face to face with Mrs. Stuyvesant's companion. It was Miss Lang he saw, the thin, sallow face turned to a greenish hue, the pale, fishy eyes with the dull gleam in them, than which, coward as he was, he would rather have faced the mouths of belching cannon in fierce battle.

She came forward with the steady, creeping motion of a cat preparing to spring, the long, thin fingers twitching nervously. What she might have done, what she meant to say, Mr. Wing never paused to learn. With a shrill cry of desperate terror, and a swift rush which sent a stand of bric-a-brac that came in his way crashing to the floor, he darted through the doorway, and was caught fast in the vise-like grip of Mr. Jacobs, who was standing guard in the hall.

The secret of this sudden exciting termination of his brief season of triumph, was due to Miss Lang's watchful jealousy. She had distinguished his voice in passing the parlors, and listened long enough to understand the nature of the revelation he was making. She could readily divine what he would make of his asserted knowledge, and crept away intent, upon one object only—to baffle him in this, and

force him to a speedy recognition of her own indubitable claim.

In two sentences Miss Lang had related the assertion she had overheard him make to the one most deeply implicated by it—Mrs. Harland.

"Bring him back, Jacobs," the coldly-measured tones of the latter commanded; and the shrinking, little lawyer, was dragged forward like a criminal arraigned before his judge. "If you have been at Crag's Peak, if you have seen the record there, you know the truth. Take back every word of the shameful scandal you have been telling my daughter."

As an actress Mrs. Harland had been a success, but it is safe to surmise that her low, intense tones had never thrilled an audience with such powerful effect as they struck to the heart of Mr. Julius Wing. If she had commanded him now he would have gone down upon his knees and pleaded for mercy in the utmost humility of his craven spirit.

"I take it all back, Miss Ruby," he falteringly articulated. "It wasn't so; she was married true enough, for I hunted up the clergyman and made sure of that. There must have been a divorce, I suppose."

"Never mind what you suppose, sir; you have said all that is necessary. Come, Ruby; the time has come when you, too, must know the story which my desire now will not sink into oblivion."

Their withdrawal scarcely lessened the abject terror which had taken hold of Mr. Wing. He had rightly interpreted the vengeful malicious expression of the low-voiced, meek-mannered companion who had never been known by any one of the household to show a trace of uncommon emotion. Left alone with him, for Mr. Jacobs had also taken his departure, she pounced upon him, using teeth and nail, scratching, biting, shaking him, until her overwrought, injured affections found utterance in a reproachfully abusive torrent of words. And Mr. Wing submitted to it all unresistingly as some miserable mouse in the clutches of its arch-enemy, the cat, until after a final shake she released her hold upon him, panting and breathless after the violent exertion her passion had induced.

With bloody rivulets seaming his face, where her sharp nails had traced themselves, his sparse hair and glossy whiskers hopelessly thinned and disordered, Mr. Wing stood a mournfully pathetic model of patience torn down from its monument, hardly used, but patient still.

"Shall I go now, Lisette?" in plaintive reproach. "Cruel heart! to mistake me so. If you could but have trusted me, if you had let me explain—"

Your powers of persuasion would have failed at last on the credulous piece of antiquity! Oh, you miserable, falsifying villain! You didn't suppose I knew that, did you? You would have thrown me over as you did once before, but I have provided against that, do you hear? Go! You shall go, but only to fulfill your promise—your promise to marry me made in the presence of witnesses two days ago. You did not suspect that, did you, of your 'credulous piece of antiquity' in the shape of a fiancée?"

It is but a step from the ridiculous to the sublime, from the comic to the terrible, from comedy to tragedy.

In the instant Mr. Wing cowered in anticipation of the wrath to come, as Mrs. Harland and her daughter turned away, and Jacobs quietly withdrew, not one of them all saw the ashy face and bowed figure of Boyd Stuyvesant shrink away from the distant entrance arch. Back to the library from whence he had been drawn by the sudden *frasca* in the hall, the dazed, awed look which had lifted partially settling back over his face again. A shivering groan parted his lips as he groped again for whatever he had sought among the scattered contents of the table by which he had paused once before—groped, and this time found the object he had sought.

"All lost—all lost! Before night all Richmond will ring with the story. Heaven pardon my guilty soul, I can never face the result." The object he held pressed his side. There was no sound, but the life-weary man felt forward to the floor with the silent instrument which had answered to his hand fallen from his relaxing fingers. An air pistol, with a red stain upon it, shone in the bright gleam of the winter sunshine, where it lay by his side.

CHAPTER XXII.

UNITED.

"Revenge, at first thought sweet,
Bitter ere long, back on itself recoils."

In her daughter's chamber Mrs. Harland told again the story of her early life, of her love turned to bitter, undying hate, which had left her relentless in her pursuit of the revenge fully wreaked at last, and after all so unsatisfying in its result.

"It is a hard and bitter story of a hard and bitter life," she said, in conclusion, drearily, "but no more than is fitting one of our line. We have been a proud, bad lot, from first to last, and not one but has come to a sorrowful or evil end. It is twenty years since I have breathed a prayer, Ruby, but there is one stirring in my heart to-night—that Ruby may be spared the sorrow and the bitterness of a life like mine. In all the years since you have known life I have never felt as I do to-day. All my bitterness toward Boyd, my wish to further his misery and that of the woman he loves, has fallen suddenly away. We will go away, you and I, and leave them to the best peace they can find, never broken by reminder from me. Coral will find happiness, and with that knowledge they will surely gain peace."

It was an endeavor to stifle the faint stirrings of newly awakened remorse. A great pitying awe had settled over Ruby's face, a wonderful shade fitting so expressively in the dusky soft eyes, and curving the proud mouth to a tenderness so infinitely sad, that the pain and longing of the mother's heart revealed that prayer with all the yearning of fear and hope for the beautiful girl's future.

"It has been such a sorrowful fate for them," Ruby said. "I know now why I have never shared your enmity toward them, and I am thankful that it was so. I should have loved—my father—the word sounded strangely passing her lips—"I pity and reverence him. Dear little Coral!" I pity and reverence him. Suffer—and gentle, saint-like Mrs. Stuyvesant! Oh, mother, you have been bitterly relentless for so long; let one merciful act atone for it at last. Take away the barrier which has divided those two for such a weary time. Mr. Stuyvesant has influence enough to have that first marriage annulled, and the second ratified, legally, without dragging the whole sorrowful story to light. Let it be done, mother; withdraw your opposition which alone has deterred them thus far—you and I will be happier for it. Restore them Coral, and take the assurance of that much comfort to that weary, suffering angel of patience."

"I go to her?—Never!" "Then let me, mother. It would lighten a little of my burden, for feeling the weight of hopelessness in my own heart leaves me with tenderer sympathy for them. We have only each other; shall not the bond of strong affec-

tion which has risen between us be welded by that act of forbearance from you?"

"Do you blame me, then, Ruby?" "Not blame. I might have done the same, or worse, influenced as you were. That day upon the river, mother, when I knew that Coral was going straight forward to danger, if not death, I had murder in my heart. Thank Heaven, the temptation was taken away in time to spare me a life of the bitterest remorse, but in the moment I saw her deathly white face sinking beneath the bleak black waters, I suffered such agonies of anguish as I imagine lost souls must know. I was not wholly subdued by that day's experience, but it was the beginning of a change which is humbling my own pride of willfulness. Don't refuse my strongest appeal—let me take that assurance from you to Mrs. Stuyvesant."

"You can do as you like, Ruby. I shall never, by act or word, trouble them again."

"Thanks, my own mother." Ruby's pressure of her hand was a caress. They were never demonstrative in their affection for each other, which was deep and strong. She went away at once to Mrs. Stuyvesant's room, happy at thought of the good work she had prevailed toward performing, and feeling that every moment would be precious after the hope renewed she was carrying.

Helene was alone. She sat in her favorite low chair, the pale, thin face turned in profile, her eyes closed in a light slumber. Ruby paused with a little awe stealing over her, so fair and pure that was face seemed, and happy in its unconsciousness. The other started and awoke under her gaze, seeming surprised at sight of this unusual visitor.

Ruby delivered her glad message with all the tender care her strong young spirit could feel for this suffering, broken one. Helene heard, with hands clasped in a tight strain, and face slowly irradiating with a solemn joy the girl beside her could not understand.

"Coral coming home—my husband to be so in reality at last! No future persecution—nothing but peace. It will be peace, I know; I felt it coming in my dream, but it is not for my life here. I had such a heavy heartache until I slept, such a dread and foreboding. It followed like a nightmare into my sleep when I seemed to hear Boyd call me—'Helene, oh! my love,'—and then the burden fell away. He and I were standing together with a glorious golden light about us, ineffably at peace."

"Take the knowledge of it to him," Ruby urged.

And Helene, her wistful dark eyes lighted with that solemn joy, flitted away like a shadow, noisless wraith. It was more than seven years before she sought him with the confession on her lips she was going to utter now—the confession of her awakened love unspoken then, never to be uttered now. Strange that no warning chill prepared her for the scene she was to meet—doubly strange with that heavenly quiet of peace come upon her.

Within the library the wintry sunshine was penetrating goldenly. The cold, white statues in their niches had sought a glow from it, the silken hangings reflected it rosy, the air in the room was like a warm, fragrant breath, and the little gold-fish in a crystal globe in the window dashed and quivered like tangible essences of the rare bright light. But summery air, and rich surroundings and mellow sunshine, were blotted away. There remained only a stark, rigid figure, lying prone upon the floor, the death-stricken face turned away, the silvered hair clotted in the gore that had gathered in a sanguine pool about him.

An hour passed, and not a sound had come from the library. Ruby, drawn toward it by some uneasy instinct, shrieked out at the dread sight meeting her there—the blood-dappled, rigid form of the man, and by his side, fair and cold as the marble faces looking down upon them, the wife of his love—Helene. Estranged through life, death had been merciful in uniting them.

Coral never knew all until the spring flowers were blooming over the grave which held them both.

The shock which she had received in her weakened state, and the long journey including the wearisome ride through the stormy night up the mountain side, had brought on a relapse. When they sent for her, all haste after the occurrence of the mournful tragedy, the sole occurrence of life and death was so evenly balanced that it seemed a breath would turn it the darker way. Ruby was her untiring, faithful nurse, and Margray Harland, with the remorse which should haunt her to her death, bitter and unceasing, wearing in her soul, prayed, as she might have prayed for her own redemption, for the girl's life.

Life granted certainly at last was shadowed darkly by the great grief awaiting her, but Death's heart battled down all the objections which could be raised, and the strength of his love brought peace to the troubled heart—unbroken happiness to her life.

The whole miserable story was never whispered in the world. There was but one person even imperfectly knowing the secret who could be suspected of an intention to betray it—Mr. Julius Wing. The little lawyer had gone meekly out of the parlors where he sustained such manifest discomfiture, led in the wake of the righteously incensed Miss Lang, and taken upon himself the vows of loving and cherishing, with a patience of humility which completely lulled the suspicious tendencies of the late companion.

He was a model of devotion in a husband for fully a fortnight, and then one morning the bride awoke to find herself for the second time deserted, her little hoard in bank, the result of twelve years' miserly saving, melted suddenly away as a summer-night's dew. She is gliding to-day—a gray, thin, stealthy shadow—through the world, everywhere on the look-out for one object—Mr. Julius Wing. He has evaded her thus far, but oftener temper the wind to him should the "shorn lamb" find the missing fleece—with himself.

A miserable, haunted life was Margray Harland's, laid down before very long, but without a hope lighting her way through the valley of shadows.

There are two for whom I would gladly mark out some definite course, happier and not less bright than their future promises. One, a woman, whose rarely beautiful face is softened by an abiding sadness, has won fame through the art to which she has apparently devoted her life. The other, a young man, whose discoveries have moved than once agitated the world of science. Will they ever be drawn together, those two, noble in soul, self-sacrificing, eminently fitted to find happiness in each other? We can but hope it; time alone can tell.

THE END.

Take Notice!—Captain Mayne Reid's new story, "THE SPECTER BARQUE," a Tale of the Pacific, commenced last week. Having been written expressly for the SATURDAY JOURNAL, it will appear in serial form in America only! The thousands of admirers of this King of Romancers will see the necessity of at once giving a definite order to their newsdealer to save them a copy of the SATURDAY JOURNAL regularly, if they would not be disappointed by being unable to secure the papers containing this splendid serial.

FEMINE NAMES AND THEIR MEANING.

Frances is truly fair,
Bertha is purely bright,
Clara is clear to see,
Lucy is a star of light.
Felicity is happy as happy can be;
Catherine is pure,
Barbara from afar,
Mabel is very fair,
Henrietta is a star.
Margaret a pearl thrown up from the sea.
Muriel is sweetest mirth,
Amelia is sincere,
Agatha is very good,
Bridget is shining here.
Matilda is a lady of honor true;
Susan is a lady,
Celia dim of sight,
Jane a graceful willow,
Beatrice gives delight,
Elizabeth an oath, pure as morning dew
Sophia is wisdom,
Letitia is joy,
Eveline a princess,
Julia a jewel joy.
Rebecca is faithful as the light of day;
Constance is resolute,
Grace is favor met,
Charlotte is nobility,
Harriet an odor sweet,
Abigail is joyful as the robin's lay.
Sarah is a lady,
Isabel is fair,
Lucinda is constant,
Jemima sounds in air.
Caroline is noble-spirited and brave;
Lydia is well,
Judith a song of praise,
Cornelia is harmony,
Priscilla ancient of days,
Selina a nightingale where branches wave.

The Mad Detective:

OR, THE GIRLS OF NEW YORK.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.

AUTHOR OF "ROCKY MOUNTAIN BOB," "WOLF DEMON," "OVERLAND KIT," "RED MAZEPA," "BLACK OF SPADERS," "HEART OF FIRE," "WITCHES OF NEW YORK," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXII.

BETWEEN TWO FIRES.

BLACKIE stared at the Irishman in utter astonishment.

"What is that you say?" he exclaimed.

"Bad 'cess to me! don't I spake plain enough?" cried O'Shane, decidedly out of temper.

"I say that Miss Rosaline Ameston, of Nashville, Tennessee, wishes to see ye at the Hoffman House."

"Rosaline Ameston?" muttered Blackie, and an anxious expression came over his face.

"Yes, don't ye remember the lady?"

Blackie did not reply; his face clouded over, and he seemed lost in thought. O'Shane waited for a moment, and then spoke again:

"Is it deaf ye are, me jewel?"

"No, no," muttered Blackie; "I hear you well enough."

"Faix! the message don't seem to please ye much, judging by your face," protested the Irishman.

Blackie glanced for a moment at the excited face of O'Shane in an absent sort of way, and then commenced to pace up and down the room, his hands behind him and his brows knitted in deep thought. O'Shane lost patience.

"What the devil is the matter wid ye?" he finally exclaimed. "Do ye know the lady or don't ye? Are ye going to see her or not?"

"By what strange combination of circumstances does it happen that you are acquainted with Rosaline Ameston?" Blackie demanded, suddenly, pausing in his walk and facing the Irishman.

"Oh, I knew her a long time ago," was the man's rejoinder.

"But how did she know that you and I were acquainted?" Blackie evidently was in no mood for prevarication and mystery.

"How the devil could I tell that she knew you?" O'Shane answered, in indignation.

"Faix! I happened to mention your name promiscuously, and she axed me if you were the Captain Alexander Blackie, of a New York regiment, who was stationed at Nashville, Tennessee, for a time during the war. Of course, I replied that I couldn't answer for that, and then she described you as purty and exact as if you had been standing to the fore all the time."

Blackie had listened attentively, and when the Irishman had finished, he cast a sidelong glance into O'Shane's face; then he stroked his mustache, apparently deep in reflection.

O'Shane had noticed the look and was puzzled to account for it, but he assumed an innocent expression, drew down the corners of his mouth, and wrinkled his forehead in imitation of Blackie, as if he too was troubled with weighty thoughts.

Blackie in a few moments, seemed to have made up his mind.

"O'Shane, there's trouble ahead."

"Sure, and that's what I was afraid of!" O'Shane replied, knowingly.

"And that trouble comes from a woman."

"That's been the cry ever since the days of Mother Eve!" The Irishman spoke emphatically.

"Sorra a bit of mischief there's been in this world but that a woman's been at the bottom of it."

"You might as well know the truth, O'Shane," Blackie said, thoughtfully. "The chances now are almost two to one that I shall not marry this heires."

"That's big odds, me b'y, but it's many a time I've seen the dark horse win the race and the favorite 'way in the wake," O'Shane observed, reflectively.

"Sure, I thought that it was a 'walk-over,' you'd have Van Tromp said that the girl was 'dead gone' on ye."

"Ah, it isn't the heires that I'm to have trouble with," Blackie answered, with a doubtful shake of the head. "It's the other one."

"What has she got to do with the affair, at all, at all?" exclaimed O'Shane, pretending to be greatly astonished.

"You might as well know the whole truth," Blackie said, thoughtfully. "Don't you remember that when Van Tromp, on the night we three met in the Pavilion for the first time, asked me if I was free to marry, I replied that legally I was, though morally I was not?"

"Yes, to be sure I do."

"And, if you remember, I further explained that, just at the close of the war, I had been engaged to be married to a young girl in Nashville, Tennessee, but becoming involved in a brawl, I had been obliged to fly for my life, and that since that time I had never met the girl, although I had searched for her?"

"Yes, I remember."

"Well, that girl is this Rosaline Ameston!"

"Bedad! that's ugly now, isn't it?"

"Yes, I fancy that it will be unpleasant."

"And just as you were getting along so nately wid the heires! By the powers! it will be hard for ye to marry her now, and ye in love wid the other girl, and it's a beauty she is, too!" the Irishman said, thoughtfully.

"No, no!" exclaimed Blackie, looking at the Irishman in astonishment. "You are laboring under a mistake. It is Ernestine that I am in love with, and not this other girl."

The Irishman gave utterance to a prolonged whistle. He was astounded at this intelligence.

"The devil ye say!" he exclaimed, breathlessly; "and ye are not in love with Rosaline?"

"No."

"Be gobl' but ye said ye was."

"Yes, but when I said so I had not met Ernestine. I thought that I truly loved Rosaline; imagined, too, that the love was still in my heart and would never be supplanted by another passion; but, as I have said, I had not met this girl then. Since I have known her, little by little the old love has faded out and the new one has taken its place. Why, not twenty minutes ago, in this very room, Ernestine and I plighted our troth. And now, like a phantom in my path, rises the woman whom I thought I should never see again."

"Faix, I wouldn't see her, me jewel, at all," suggested O'Shane, who was at his wits' end to find a way out of the scrape.

Blackie shook his head.

"That course can not be followed," he replied. "I know Rosaline of old. If I do not go to her, she will come to me."

"True for ye!" exclaimed the Irishman, impulsively.

"Ah! I see that you know something of her resolute will," Blackie said, a little astonished at the exclamation.

"Yes—of course—sure, one can see in her face that she's not a girl to be trifled with," the Irishman explained, just a little confused.

"She, naturally, will receive me as if there had only been a break of days in our love instead of years," Blackie continued. "You can easily judge how painful it will be for me to repulse the caresses of the woman who was once so dear to me, how terrible the task to tell her that I love her no longer, and that I am engaged to be married to another."

"Sure, she knows that already," blurted out O'Shane; and then hardly had the words passed his lips before he commenced to inwardly curse his own stupidity in speaking.

"She does know it?" Blackie exclaimed, in wonder. "Who told her?"

"Sure, it was me that told her, the blundering villain that I am!" cried O'Shane, pathetically. "Now call me a blockhead—a murdering thafe of the world—any thing ye like! Kick me out of the house if it please ye; sure, I deserve it! I'm the biggest blaggard that ever lived!"

Serious as were the thoughts that were pressing upon Blackie's mind, he could not help smiling at the comical misery of the self-accusing Irishman.

"The mischief is done and words will not help it any," Blackie replied. "But, tell me how did it happen that I became the subject of conversation between you?"

"Sorra a one of me can tell!" exclaimed O'Shane. "Your name came up some way. She gave a description of ye and of course I said that ye answered to it, and then I believe that she said something about Elbert Van Tromp spaking that his sister would be married soon, and I replied carelessly, ye know, that I believed you would be the happy man. Oh! bad 'cess to the wagging of me tongue! Faix! I would have thanked any gentleman to have taken me by the throat and choked me until I was black in the face just then, as I saw her face change and her eyes get as big as saucers."

"She seemed angry then when she heard that it was probable that I would marry Ernestine?" Blackie queried.

"Divil a word of a life is there in it!" O'Shane rejoined, promptly. "Since I've got you into the scrape wid my blundering, it's only right that I should make a clane breast of it."

"I'll go to her at once," Blackie's tones were decided.

"Oh, Blackie, me jewel, will ye ever forgive me for getting ye into the scrape? One woman is bad enough, but two at the same time is the divil!"

"Perhaps it is as well as it is. Your disclosure has broken the force of the blow. The sooner I see her, the better. Anticipation of trouble is half the time worse than the actual trouble. Wait until I get my hat and coat. I will be down in a moment." Then Blackie left the parlor.

O'Shane chuckled quietly to himself.

"Faix! and I got well out of that," he muttered. "divil a bigger blunder did I ever make in all my life. I wonder what the end will be? Bedad! it will be a nate ruction!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE LOST LOVE.

INSIDE of five minutes Blackie returned, puzzled for the street, and he and O'Shane at once left the house.

As they descended the steps, O'Shane looked around him carefully. He was looking for the man in gray, but that individual was nowhere to be seen, and the Irishman felt correspondingly jubilant.

Blackie noticed this action of O'Shane, and inquired the cause, and that gentleman proceeded to relate his little adventure with the unknown, who had kept such constant watch upon him from the time he had left the hotel until he had entered the Van Tromp mansion.

Blackie rather wondered at the affair, but could offer no solution to the mystery.

The two walked rapidly down the avenue

"Suppose he denies that he was following us?" Blackie asked. "You forget, he denied that he was following you."

"Yes, but didn't I see him with me own two eyes?" O'Shane demanded. "What if you did? The streets are free to every one; besides, you have not committed any offense which renders you liable to the law, so the man is clearly not a police spy. What does it matter if he does follow you? Come along and never mind him."

"But it's disagreeable to have a dirty blaggard like that dogging a man's footsteps all the time! By me soul I'll murder that fellow if he annoys me much longer!"

Then the two proceeded down the street until they reached the hotel.

"I'll take you up to her room right away," the Irishman said. "I know where it is and it's no use bothering the office."

Blackie consented and they proceeded upstairs immediately.

Arriving at the door of Rosaline's room, O'Shane knocked. The clear voice of the girl bade him enter, and in a moment more the two men stood face to face with the diamond beauty.

She advanced to receive Blackie with outstretched hand, not a trace of embarrassment in her manner. O'Shane had watched her closely, expecting to see some traces of agitation as she met her old-time lover, but he was disappointed.

"And now, Miss Rosie, if you will have the kindness to excuse me, I'll be after having ye alone with Mr. Blackie. I have some important business to transact down-town. I shall be pleased to call upon ye this evening, for a while, if you are not engaged," O'Shane said, gallantly.

"Oh, yes, I shall always be at home to you, Mr. O'Shane," she replied, smilingly. "I am always glad to see my old friends."

Then O'Shane bowed himself out, mentally wondering how the affair would end and congratulating himself that he was not in Blackie's position.

"Sit down," the girl said, pushing a rocking-chair toward Blackie, after the door had fairly closed behind O'Shane, and let me take your hat and overcoat. Give you fair warning that I expect you to pay me quite a visit. I'm not going to let you run away with only a how-d'ye-do."

Blackie submitted with a good grace. Removing his overcoat he gave it with his hat into the hands of the young woman, then took the seat which she had proffered.

Rosaline sat down by the center-table and rested her arm upon the polished marble. Blackie, three paces off, could not help remarking how much she had improved in the few years that had passed since they had met.

The slender, fragile girl had been transformed into a stately, superb woman; time had rounded the glorious form and given a rare beauty to the winning face with its clear-cut outlines. Blackie, too, noticed with wonder the jewels which adorned her person; the diamonds in her ears alone were worth a mint of money. It was plain to him that fortune had dealt kindly with his old-time love. It was not alone the changes in her person telling of fortune's favor and of time's perfecting hand which had attracted his attention, but there was an air of self-reliance—of command visible in the girl's face and in her graceful carriage which he could not remember of ever seeing there before.

And on her part, too, she had been mentally comparing the man who sat before her, cool and impassive, with the eager, reckless lover who once knelt at her feet, pressed warm kisses upon her willing lips, and vowed himself her slave forever. To her eyes, Blackie had changed but little. His face was paler and thinner, but the dark eyes still shone with their old joyous light, and the careless, happy smile still played about the mouth.

"Well, how have you been since we last saw each other?" the girl asked, breaking the silence.

"I have lived," he replied, in the old-time careless way that she knew so well.

"And you mean by that, that, having lived, you have enjoyed your life," she said. "You were always of a happy disposition."

"And is not that the best way to meet the rude blows of the world?" he asked. "The man who laughs generally wins."

"And have you won?" she questioned, quickly.

"Yes; won a living," he replied, laughing. "If one can judge from the fashion of your dress, you have won something more than a bare living," she said, pointedly.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, warningly; "take care! Do not question too sharply, or I may try that too. Fortune has not bestowed her gifts upon you with a niggardly hand, if one may judge from the diamonds that you wear. Why, Rosaline, an Indian princess from the far-off East could not boast richer jewels; they fairly dazzle one's eyes."

"There was a time, Alex, when you declared that you could not look at me because your eyes were dazzled, and I wore no diamonds then," she said, meaningly.

"Yes," and a low sigh came from Blackie's lips, and yet it was hardly a sigh, more like a long-drawn breath; his eyes, too, wandered restlessly to the floor.

The cool, clear eyes of the girl watched the face of the man. It was evident that she was more master of her feelings than he of his.

"Alex, how do I look?" she asked, suddenly, and she rested her forehead in her hand, the arm of which was supported by the table, and gazed at him in a peculiar, dreamy way from under her long, dark eyelashes.

"More beautiful than ever," he replied, slowly, raising his gaze to her face as he spoke.

And in the face of the woman of twenty-four do you discover any trace of the girl of seventeen who, like a little stupid goose, thought that there was only one man in the world, and that his name was Alexander Blackie, a gallant captain, so dashing and so handsome in his blue uniform?" she asked, a smile upon her face, and yet Blackie could plainly see that there was but little mirth in the girl's heart.

"Oh, yes; I should have recognized you anywhere had we met," he responded, affecting not to notice the pointed allusion to the old-time intimacy so apparent in her speech.

"Is it possible?"

"Yes; only that time has improved you greatly. The rose-bud has bloomed into the perfect flower."

"How familiar that sounds!" she exclaimed; "you used to make just such pretty speeches before. I was a young and foolish girl then; and when you said that you loved me I believed it."

CHAPTER XXIV.

A LOVING VENGEANCE.

Quite a long silence followed Rosaline's speech. The words had been spoken lightly enough, but there was a sting in her tone that reached Blackie's heart. The struggle was near at hand, and the instinct of the man told him that it would be a painful one.

"Young girls are so silly, you know," she said, finding that he did not speak.

"Rosaline, you are reproaching me," he protested, gravely.

"Reproaching you! Why should I reproach you?" There was a bitter meaning in the simple question.

"Because you think that I have wronged you," he replied.

"Why, how could you wrong me?" and her lips curled as she put the question.

"By proving unfaithful to the vows I swore." "And that was about seven years ago," she said, thoughtfully. "Seven years is a very long time for love to last. I do not expect miracles in this world. You forgot me before seven months were gone, and now I do not expect you to remember after seven years."

"Forgot you after seven months!" he cried, in wonder; "why, Rosaline, you wrong me, upon my soul you do! It was many a long year before your image faded from my heart—before I gave you up as one lost to me forever."

"Alex, in the old time I believed you, and now I am ashamed to learn that the man whom I once loved has fallen so low as to hide himself behind a falsehood!" exclaimed the girl, indignantly, and she rose from her seat and walked to the further end of the room, her face full of angry passion, and her little hands clenched tightly together.

Blackie did not reply, although his cheeks had flushed and his temple had burned when the bitter words of the incensed woman had fallen upon his ears.

And then, annoyed that she let anger master her, Rosaline came slowly back and stood by the side of the table, looking, with a face white as the marble upon which her hand rested, upon Blackie.

"You are very bitter against me, Rosaline," he said.

"Have I not reason to be?"

"No," Blackie replied, firmly.

"Why did you not answer my letters?" she demanded.

"Your letters!" Blackie betrayed utter astonishment. "I never received one."

"Never received one! I wrote you five if I wrote you one."

"And where did you direct them?"

"To the place you told me in your letter—San Antonio, Texas."

"Rosaline, as I hope for mercy hereafter, I declare to you that I never received a single line from you. And the instant I dared to venture, I came to Nashville after you, but no trace could I find. You had disappeared!"

She looked at him for a moment with her clear eyes, and he bore the gaze undauntedly.

"There is truth in your face," she said, and then the proud spirit of the woman seemed to vanish, and all the love which she had ever felt for Alex Blackie came back with redoubled force.

A moment she looked at him with outstretched hands, and then, sinking on her knees before him, she seized one of his hands and covered it with kisses.

Only for a single second Blackie gazed at the kneeling form of the woman whom he had once loved so well, and then, springing impulsively to his feet, he raised her in his arms and folded her gently to his breast. And though he held the quivering form of the lovely girl within his arms, although he fancied that he could hear the beating of her heart against his own, yet in his face there was no flush of joy, but only a look of sad resignation.

"Oh, Alex, you have made me so happy," she murmured.

"Made you happy?"

"Yes; do I not feel the pressure of your arms around me—does not that tell me that once again you love me?" she said, slowly.

"Rosaline, I do love you," he replied, in a voice hardly above a whisper, "but not as you would be loved. It is a brother's love, not a husband's that I offer you."

With a wild expression in her eyes she looked up at his face, but she did not retreat from him.

"Oh, I know all, Alex; you are going to sell yourself to Ernestine Van Tromp. For the sake of her money you will forget the woman who for your sake would give up every thing in the world," she exclaimed, impetuously.

"And to the girl of whom you speak I have pledged my word."

"The word you gave to me was freely given years before you ever saw this girl!" she cried, imperiously. "Oh, Alex, you make me ashamed of you when I think that for the sake of a little money you will sell yourself to a woman for whom you do not care."

Blackie bit his lip, not because of the words which he had just heard, but for the words which now he was forced to speak.

"You think that for the sake of this girl's money I marry her?"

"Yes; I know all the details of the plot," she replied, quickly. "But I can save you from a share in this disgraceful scheme. Ready money I have but little of, but my diamonds are worth ten thousand dollars, at the least. Any diamond broker on Broadway will give you the sum for them. Take them freely. If each diamond was a drop of my heart's blood, I would not hesitate to make the gift!"

Impetuously—with almost feverish heat—the girl snatched the glittering gems from their places in her ears, tore the cross from her bosom, and extended them in the hollow of her hand to Blackie, and he, with folded arms, and a sad smile upon his face, stood motionless, and looked upon the wondrously beautiful woman.

"Take them!" she exclaimed, imploringly. "I can not," he replied, shaking his head.

"Why not?" she demanded, in wonder.

"I am very poor, Rosaline—a man, too, who is an outcast, and can not pretend to the manly graces of a gentleman; and yet, Rosaline, vagabond as I am, I should feel degraded in accepting any thing from you."

"A man can not be disgraced by accepting aid from the woman who loves him!" cried Rosaline impulsively.

Rosaline, you force me to speak words which must give you terrible agony," he said, evidently deeply agitated.

She looked for a moment into his face, and then, thrusting the diamonds carelessly into her pocket as if they had been common pebbles instead of precious stones, she advanced to him and laid her head down upon his breast.

"Put your arms around me," she said, quietly. "I can bear cruel words better if I am safe locked in your embrace."

He obeyed.

Again she clung to him with all the trust of loving woman.

"Now speak," she said; "remember that I, too, am like you—a child of the world, though now tricked out in the silks and laces of a fine lady."

"Rosaline, I would rather you should think me the fickle, uncertain man that I am, rather than a vile one." Deep emotion was evident in his voice. "I have not sold myself for money. At first I looked upon the scheme more in the light of a frolic than any thing else, but after I had been a week in the house with this girl, seeing her daily, almost hourly, despite myself I grew to love her."

The rounded form imprisoned within his arms shivered just a little and that was all.

"And now, Rosaline," he continued, "I admit my pledge to you, and, if you claim the fulfillment, I will do all in my power to crush the new love which has grown up in my heart and revive into live coals the dead embers of the old."

For fully five minutes the girl replied not; she remained motionless as a statue, but that Blackie could feel the convulsive movement of the breast pressed so closely against his own, he would have believed that the girl had fainted.

At last, with a sigh, she raised her head. A single, long, lingering look, full of tenderness, she gave into Blackie's face, and then, freeing herself from his arms, she took his two hands in hers.

"And do you think that I could be happy with you, knowing that the image of another filled your heart? Oh, no! I want all your heart or none. I will show you how true, how great my love is by giving you back your pledge. You are free—free to marry whom you like. Oh, Alex!" and a look of anguish came over her fair face, and she pressed his hands violently. "You don't know how hard it is for me to give you up to another woman! But, now go; good-by!"

And then, with a sudden motion, she threw herself on his neck and imprinted a soft kiss upon his cheek.

"Do not forget me too soon," she murmured, in a voice full of tremulous agony.

Blackie felt that to prolong the parting would be but to add to her suffering. A single kiss he pressed upon her full red lips, and then, seizing his overcoat and hat, he rushed from the room.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 187.)

Old Hurricane:
THE DUMB SPY OF THE DES MOINES.

A ROMANCE OF THE BLACK-HAWK LANDS.
BY OLL COOMES.

AUTHOR OF "HAWKEYE HARRY," "BOY SPY," "IRON SIDES, THE SCOUT," "DEATH-NOTICE, THE DESTROYER," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXI.
TURNING THE TABLES.

For a moment a great cloud of smoke hung between the eyes of the robbers and Fort Des Moines, but when it finally cleared away they saw that their first shot had not touched the enemy's defense. So the cannon was at once reloaded and carefully trained upon the fort.

The second shot struck some of the upper timbers, shivering them into splinters.

A shout of triumph pealed from the outlaws' lips, and was answered from the throats of a hundred savages that were lying in ambush along the extremities of the plain.

Singular as it seemed to the outlaws, not one of the claim-stakers made himself visible, and, following up the advantage already gained, the cannon was kept playing with terrible effect upon the fort. A breach had been made in the south wall, that would enable a storming party to carry it with ease.

Still none of the claim-stakers had been seen, nor had Old Hurricane ventured to show himself again. The fort was being battered down at such a fearful rate as would necessitate some demonstration on the part of the defenders or occupants. But, when several more shots had been fired, and the claim-stakers made no movement or show, Reckless Ralph began to suspect that he was not right, and at last his suspicions found expression in the exclamation:

"Boys, we've been outwitted again!"

"Outwitted? Why, captain, what do you mean?" asked a robber.

"I mean we've been firing like a parcel of fools, upon a deserted fort. The claim-stakers have given us the slip."

"Good Lord! It can't be possible!"

"It is possible, though—but, see here; every man prepare to storm the fort. The enemy may be hiding away in holes like combs, frightened almost to death by our cannon's roar."

For the next minute there was a wild commotion on board the boat. Each man looked to the priming of his rifle, loosened his pistols and knives, and then went ashore.

"Forward, and no quarter to the men," shouted Reckless Ralph.

At a full run they charged upon the fort. They reached it without an opposing shot. They swarmed in through the breach in the wall; they found the fort—DESERTED!

A shout of mingled triumph and disappointment now rent the air. Then from the bluffs to the westward groups of savages came swarming across the plain, and joined their white friends in the little fortification. A wild and terrible confusion now reigned.

Every hole and corner within the work was searched for concealed foes, for the strange disappearance of Old Hurricane led them to believe there was some secret hiding-place about the fort.

But in this they were mistaken, as they found to their sorrow when, deep bass voices suddenly called out, like the blast of a trumpet, high above the noise of the exultant allies:

"Surrender, surrender, every mother's son of you, or by the gods of Olympus, you'll be blown into the clouds! Surrender, you devils, surrender!"

The savages and outlaws started, sudden terror stamped upon their features. A deadly silence fell upon the little fort. The astonished allies gazed from one to another with interrogative looks.

"Surrender, you devils, or we'll open fire upon you!" rang that voice again.

Every eye was at once turned in the direction from whence the demand came, and, to the dismay and horror of the outlaws, they saw Old Hurricane standing on the forward end of their scow, while, just behind him and near the cannon, stood Captain John Rossgrave, and just behind him stood his men, with rifles in hand.

Captain Rossgrave, being a capital artilleryman, had trained the cannon on the fort, and now stood ready to apply the match.

Crazed with sudden rage, Reckless Ralph shouted to his men:

"Charge them!—charge the devils!"

In a wild, crowding mass the outlaws and savages went swarming out through the breach in the wall of the fort, and went charging like howling demons toward the boat.

The next instant a solid shot from the howitzer went plowing through the ranks of the advancing foe, causing them to recoil, turn and flee with terror.

Reckless Ralph, Thoms and an Indian chief endeavored to rally the panic-stricken horde, but all in vain. Like frightened sheep they fled across the plain and sought shelter among the hills, and there was no alternative but for Reckless Ralph, Thoms and the chief to follow them, for Captain Rossgrave handled the cannon with great skill and made things warm for awhile.

Thus the tables had been completely turned, and the outlaws and their allies gloriously defeated. As the reader has no doubt inferred, all was due to the stratagem of Wild Dick, who had drugged the rum that threw them into a deep sleep, then rally the panic-stricken horde by one into the hold of the boat.

Old Hurricane had made his exit and escape from the little fort by wading the creek to the river, then crawling under the river bank to the boat.

The claim-stakers now moved the boat up

the river to a point opposite the fort, and, having landed, they again took possession of their fortification. They proceeded forthwith to repair the damage done to the wall, and by sunset had it in a condition good as ever, and the captured howitzer mounted so that it could be turned in an instant in any direction that the foe might come.

But where were the women—Camilla, Dora and Dolly?

Before leaving the fort they had been conducted to a point of safety a few miles east of the river; and, as soon as darkness again set in, Harry Dudley, Ransom Kendall and Noisy Nat were sent to conduct them back to the stronghold.

It was shortly after dark when the three men took their departure and crossed the river. They were compelled to feel their way with caution, for they knew not but that Indians were outlying about the fort to capture any small party or scout that might venture out.

They reached the women, however, without trouble, to find them safe, though almost distracted with fear and anxiety, for the roar of the cannon had been borne distinctly to their ears.

The party at once set off on their return to the fort, but were now compelled to undergo an unexpected difficulty. A heavy, damp fog was settling around them, excluding every ray of light, rendering the air chill and dull, and deadening the vibration upon which the ear of the hunter so much depends in the dark. However, Nat took the lead, and the party pressed forward as rapidly as possible; but the fog continued to thicken until every thing was wrapped in total obscurity; and at last Nat informed his friends that he had lost their course.

This news was received with a feeling bordering on despair by the women, for the day's trials had completely unnerved them. But the assurance of their escort gave them some hopes, and they again moved on.

After hours of wandering about, they struck the river, but neither Nat nor the Boy Ranger was familiar enough with the country to tell whether they were above or below the fort.

In searching along the bank for some landmark that might impart the desired information, they were so fortunate as to find an old dug-out, in which they succeeded in crossing the stream.

A consultation was now held as to the direction they should take, but no one could give any adequate idea of the proper course. Every star was shut from view by the dismal fog, and not a breath of air was stirring.

They finally decided to travel down the river for a couple of miles, and if they did not then reach the fort, they would retrace their steps and continue on up the stream.

So they at once began their uncertain journey, moving slow and cautiously. In fact, they could move no other way, for the darkness was so intense that they could scarcely see their hands before them, and were compelled to pick their way with care.

After an hour's journeying they emerged into an open plain, and this gave them reason to believe they were following the proper course. They believed, or had reason to hope, that the plain was the same one upon which the fort was located. If so, by continuing on, they would soon reach their destination. So they moved on, their hopes gaining strength at every step.

But alas! They were suddenly brought to an abrupt halt by the sound of voices calling to each other from out the depths of the darkness. They were readily recognized as the voices of Indians, who appeared to be lost themselves in the mazes of fog and night.

"I tell you, friends," said Nat, "we're in no little danger, for I should judge by their voices that a thousand red-skins are abroad upon this plain. But what can the skulking knaves be doing hereabouts? I wonder?"

"There is no telling. They may be preparing to storm the fort, if this plain is—"

Here silence was imposed upon the speaker by the sound of a voice shouting:

"Look sharp, red-skins! They entered the plain a few minutes ago. They must not be permitted to get back into the woods, nor reach the fort!"

None knew that voice better than did Camilla Rossgrave. It was the voice of Reckless Ralph.

Scarcely had the villain ceased speaking, when Nat said, in a low tone:

"Here—boys and girls—huddle up here! They're arter us, cuss their pickers!"

Then the dull thud of horses' hoofs was heard approaching, and the next moment a dozen horsemen swept past them.

"Cussed coveys!" exclaimed Nat; "but now for the fort!"

The little party hurried forward, but the sound of voices just before them caused them to bend slightly from their course. The result was almost a fatal one, for the next moment they were lost on the plain, while all around them they could still hear those voices calling to each other.

"By Jupiter!" exclaimed Nat, regretfully, "this is too bad, but no more'n I expected when we left our course in this awful fog. Friends, we've got to be keener, or we'll run into the clutches of the knaves. But if I could get the course again—if our friends only knew our situation and would fire a gun—"

He did not finish the sentence. Far across the plain, through the dismal fog, he saw a lurid flash, and at the same instant, almost, a cannon ball came screaming through the thick air so close to his head that he was staggered by the wind.

"There it is now, Nat," said the Boy Ranger. "There is our course-signal."

"Ay, ay, lad, and it came mortal nigh bein' the last call for me. The boys are tryin' to clear the plain of the red-skins, for they've probably found out we're—for'd on the double-quick!"

They pressed on, guided by the flash of the cannon, which ever and anon belched across the plain, stirring the fog around them.

"Move brisk, boys, move brisk, red-skins!" a commanding voice suddenly rang out near the fugitives; "move brisk, all of you, for the cannon's flash will guide them!"

Their friends passed.

The next instant the quick tramp of feet swept across their path and died away in the distance.

Then again the cannon vomited out its flame, this time almost over the heads of the fugitives.

"Hurrah! the fort is reached!" shouted Noisy Nat, at the top of his lungs; "ho, friends within! Throw open the gate and let us in, for the howl of the devil are at our heels!"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 165.)

Take Notice!—Captain Mayne Reid's new story, **THE SPECTER BARQUE**, a tale of the Pacific, commenced last week. Having been written expressly for the SATURDAY JOURNAL, it will appear in serial form in America only! The thousands of admirers of this King of Romancers will see the necessity of at once giving a definite order to their newsdealer to save them a copy of the SATURDAY JOURNAL regularly, if they would not be disappointed by being unable to secure the papers containing this splendid serial.

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A FASHIONABLE WOMAN'S PRAYER IN CHURCH.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

The following, it is quite probable, will "go the rounds"—as do many of our special contributors' good things. We are quite willing to have them do so, but ask of our press contemporaries, in quoting Joe Joy's intimate rhymes, to give their just paternity.—*Pubs. S. J.*

Give me an eye to other's failings blind,
(Miss Smith's new bonnet's quite a sight behind.)
Wake me in charity for the suffering poor—
(There comes that contribution-plate once more.)
Take from my soul all feelings covetous,
(I'll have a shawl like that, or make a fuss.)

Let love for all my kind my spirit stir,
(Save Mrs. Jones, I'll never speak to her.)
Let me in truth's fair pages take delight,
(I'll read that other novel through to-night.)

Make me contented with my earthly state,
(I wish I'd married rich, but it's too late.)

Give me a heart of faith in all my kind,
(Miss Brown's as big a hypocrite as you'll find.)
Help me to see myself as others see,
(This dress is quite becoming unto me.)

Let me act out no falsehood, I appeal,
(I wonder if they think these curls are real.)

Make my heart of humility the fount,
(How glad I am our pew's so far in front.)

Fill me with patience and the strength to wait,
(I know he'll preach until our dinner's late.)

Take from my heart each grain of self-conceit,
(I'm sure the gentlemen must think me sweet.)

Let saintly wisdom be my daily food,
(I wonder what they'll have for dinner good.)

Let not my feet ache in the road to light,
(Nobody knows how these shoes pinch and bite.)

In this world teach me to deserve the next,
(Church out? Charles, do you recollect the text?)

Strange Stories.

The Green Lady of Truagh.

A LEGEND OF COUNTY MONAGHAN.

BY AGILE PENNE.

By the green woods of Killeevy stood the castle of Desmond, the proud sept that held sway for miles around.

Bright and cheerful had the rising sun shone down upon the cold, gray walls of castle Desmond, loud and joyful had the merry cries of the bold Irish lads pealed forth on the air, when in the early morning hour, the ghostly father, the good priest of Erigle Truagh, had approached the gloomy pile, from the donjon tower of which waved the banner of the proud Earls of Desmond.

It was the wedding-day of gentle Eva, sole daughter of Desmond's stern lord; the Irish girl with the golden hair, the eyes of blue, and the step as light as the breezy air, when it bends the morning flowers by the green wood of Killeevy.

Handsome Turlough, heir to the fame and name of great O'Neal, that day was to wed the fairest flower that had ever sprung from the Desmond stock.

Young O'Neal was known far and wide as Handsome Turlough. No youth in County Monaghan braver than he; none that could so charm a maiden's eye and weave the spell of love around her soul.

Brave and handsome was the young Irish lord, fit mate for the gentle daughter of the Desmond line, so brave the young retainers of O'Neal and Desmond alike, and yet, old gossip, within their turf-thatched cabins, gravely shook their heads and prophesied woe unto the Desmond race, should gentle Eva wed the heir of O'Neal, for Handsome Turlough was a light of love; he had whispered the soft tale in many a fair girl's ear, and yet had never kept faith with one.

Gayly prancing over the emerald turf came the bridegroom and his friends, mounted on steeds that had oft neighed responsive to the trumpet's call amid the clang of arms, and now seemed conscious of the fact that instead of war's stern alarms, they bore their masters onward to love's soft dalliance.

Through Killeevy's green wood came the little troop of gay cavaliers; loud rang the joyous burst of mirth upon the perfumed air, when suddenly from behind a gnarled tree-trunk, started an aged woman, poorly clad, and grasping Handsome Turlough's gilded bridle-rein.

The spirited steed that young O'Neal bestrode half-reared, then came down to earth again, trembling in every limb.

The gray hairs of the aged crone flew wildly in the wind, and her sunken eyes shone with a demonic light.

A moment she glared into the face of Handsome Turlough, and then raising her skinny finger, shook it with menace before him.

"Whither rides Handsome Turlough, heir of great O'Neal?" the aged woman cried, in accents wild: "Is it to wed the daughter of proud Earl Desmond? Must the lamb fall into the talons of the eagle? Oh, woe to the bride! woe to the groom! sorrow and death to them all!"

"Stand out of my way, you old hag!" cried young Turlough, white with fear, and yet in his eyes there was a look of rage.

"Not till you have heard my curse, heir of the O'Neal!" replied the woman, her frame convulsed with passion as she shrieked the words. "Not for you is gentle Eva Desmond; your bride sleeps within the church-yard; beneath the turf my Mary sleeps; go you and lie beside her; a broken heart killed the colleen dear, and her death lies at your door."

"Whether you're out or in,
In your life you shall feel
The curse of all the sins,
Handsome Turlough, Knight O'Neal!"

The bridegroom waited to hear no more; enraged to madness, he struck the old woman with his clenched fist, and she staggered away and fell, half-stunned, upon the turf.

"Come, gentlemen!" cried O'Neal, in an angry voice, putting spurs to his horse and galloping onward. The rest followed. And as they rode on in the rear of O'Neal, who, moody and annoyed, kept in the advance, the story of the peasant girl's love for Handsome Turlough and his wanton desertion of her, followed by her death, was told and commented upon.

It was not a very joyous wedding-party that came from the green woods of Killeevy and rode over the emerald turf to Desmond castle that bright spring morning.

The scene within the wood seems ominous of evil.

And when the horsemen drew near to the castle, they wondered that such a gloom and stillness should hang around the massive walls, and then as they came nearer still the loud "keen," which told of death, came swelling upon the air.

With eager haste the horsemen dismounted. The sorrowing retainers came slowly to the door; and saw the tale they told.

"Gentle Eva sleeps," the aged warden cried; "she has not awoke, and the sleep she sleeps will never be broken."

With awe-stricken eyes the wedding-guests gazed upon each other, and softly they whispered of the curse called down upon O'Neal by the aged crone within the wood.

With sorrow's pain the heart of Handsome Turlough seemed like to break as he mourned by the side of her who was to have been his bride.

The "keen" rose loud and sad when the funeral train of the daughter of Desmond's earl wound through the green wood.

The mass was said and the hymn of the requiem prayer, and the bride slept alone within the church-yard. Slowly the mourners departed; but Handsome Turlough flung himself upon the new-made grave and wet the earth with his tears.

Alone within the church-yard he stood. Vainly to heaven he called to give him back his bride.

Prostrate upon the mound he lay, when a gentle voice sounded in his ear.

"Weep not, weep not," said the voice, in accents sweet and clear, like unto fairy music; "youth and valor should not despair, and vows like thine should not be given unto the winds."

Young O'Neal raised his eyes. By his side there stood the fairest maid that ever man had looked upon. All clad was she in green; her skin was as white as the shroud of the dead; her eyes and hair as black as the raven's wing.

There was charmed music upon her tongue, and such beauty, young, bright and warm, Handsome Turlough had never seen before. No maid in all green Monaghan could be compared with the dark-eyed stranger.

A tender grace and a laughing light sparkled in beauty around her face; grief in mortal heart never could resist such charms.

"The maid, for whom thy salt tears are shed, thy grief or love can never recall. She rests beneath the turf. Although I am a stranger to thee and thine, I feel that my heart strangely cleaves to thee, and now that thy plighted love is dead, give its unbroken pledge to me."

The charm was strong; the faithless tears dried away, and the yielding heart of O'Neal forgot its sorrow.

"Oh, matchless maid, I pledge my love over my buried bride! Oh, come and dwell in Turlough's hall!" O'Neal cried.

"If I am dear to thee, give me thy kiss and thy pledge to meet me here one month from today!" she quickly replied.

The kiss and pledge were given, and then, straightway, the maiden vanished, melting like thin mist into the air, and in a deadly swoon, Sir Turlough fell to the ground.

To the castle of O'Neal Handsome Turlough was carried, death in every vein.

Leech and priest both were summoned, but their skill alike were vain.

Handsome Turlough had kissed the Green Lady of Truagh, the church-yard bride, and sealed his doom.

Old was the legend; who could deny its truth? He that lingers last within the church-yard hath the Green Lady power over. If he will but plight his faith to her, and seal it by a kiss, the deadly contact of her lips infuses a fever within his veins that death alone can cure.

Vain was the offer of Handsome Turlough's gold and lands; the leech failed, and the hoary priest of Erigle Truagh with pious shrift his soul released. The curse was fulfilled, and Handsome Turlough, married to death, sleeps with his church-yard bride by the green woods of Killeevy.

Winning a Bride.

A STORY OF THE LATE CRETAN WAR.

BY COL. PRENTISS INGRAHAM.

During the war between the plucky little island of Crete, also known as Candia, and the powerful nationality of Turkey, it was my fortune to hold a commission in the service of the Cretans, who most nobly fought for a freedom they richly deserved, and whose just cause called into their ranks many volunteers, drawn thither, it is true, by various motives, from the desire to plunder, to a real wish to serve the struggling patriots.

Under my immediate command I had a medley, as it were, of all nations, and great trouble I had with them, too, for nine-tenths of the common soldiers were scoundrels of the deepest dye, and to circumvent the scheming villainy of all was a task that required a commander to be Argus-eyed, and to never sleep.

To organize a scouting corps the men were given me, and as the duties were most dangerous I had at least the satisfaction of knowing that the long most of the scamps would be killed off, and the world be thereby benefited.

The officers of this demon crew were, however, of a different mold, and gallant fellows—willing to fight to the bitter end, and fully as anxious to serve the Cretans as themselves.

Among the officers were two whom I particularly regarded—the one a tall, soldierly-formed Russian, with the blue eyes and light hair and beard of his people, and rejoicing in the cognomen of Constantine Adoneff.

Formerly an officer of distinction in the service of the Czar, and the heir to the title of one of Russia's noblest families, Constantine had been a great favorite with all who knew him, and in the Crimea had won several promotions for his courage, and received decorations upon several fields of battle, and yet the young officer was so wild, so really fast, that he was compelled at last to leave his native land in disgraceful banishment for several years, and becoming a wanderer, he was ready to throw his sword in any service where stirring strife tempted him.

The other officer I refer to was an American, a New Yorker, who had been a splendid soldier in the Union army, the son of a wealthy family, and more given to roving than to business, was content to live on a good income rather than, like his brother, become a partner in the wealthy firm of his father.

Boyd LaMotte, such was his name, was well-formed, a strongly-marked brunette, and possessing, like the Russian, a face strikingly handsome. Boyd LaMotte was my adjutant, and Constantine Adoneff my aide, and between the two there existed strong bonds of friendship, until there came to be "a woman in the case."

That both should dearly love Zuda Xenophon no one who had seen the lovely Cretan maiden could wonder at; for, but sixteen, beautiful as a fairy dream of love, and superior in education and accomplishments to most Greek women, she was all that could be desired.

She spoke English with an accent that was charming, and French with a pathos that was bewitching, and hence both the Russian and American could pour into her listening ears the story of their love—the former in French, the latter in the English tongue—and such good use had each one made of his own tongue that, in a two months' acquaintance, the fair Zuda was, so to speak, "on the fence," for between neither of her suitors could she choose.

The cruel war of the Turks had not at that time reached the lordly house of Zuda's parents, who were well off in this world's goods, and doted upon their only child, whom they constantly feared would ere long be dragged from them to become the inmate of the harem of some lustful Turk.

When not busy punishing my men for their chronic disobedience, or sending them into battle for their country's good, it was my wont to pass

many a pleasant hour in the home of the Xenophons, and amid those foreign scenes I could lounge and think, and imagine after a good dinner and a few glasses of rare old wine, that I was living in the days of the original Xenophon.

At length there came trouble in the camp, for Constantine and Boyd were rivals—rivals willing to cut each other's throats for the enjoyment of a smile from Zuda, who, with woman's tact, bestowed her favors alike on Russian and American.

Zuda confessed she loved them both, and told me, confidentially, that if either of them were killed she would be perfectly willing to marry the remaining one, and with him, mourn over the loss of the unfortunate; but to decide between them she could not, and would esteem it a favor upon my part if I could get rid of one of her suitors, by ordering him upon a "forlorn hope."

"But which one, Zuda?" I queried.

That was a matter of total indifference: she loved them both, so did her parents, but consistently she could not marry them both, and thus the matter rested, the rivals, officially, upon speaking terms, but otherwise no longer friends.

At length a dark day came for poor Zuda, for the brave Cretans were defeated in a signal battle, and with relentless fury we were driven back, leaving the home of the Xenophons to fall into their hands.

In vain did both Boyd and Constantine fight to rescue their idol, and in vain did I order up my demon crew with promises of plunder if they advanced, and death if they retreated. All was useless, and with pain we fell back, leaving Zuda and her parents in the hands of the enemy.

Thinking over the circumstances of the rivals, it occurred to me to make use of Zuda's capture for the good of ourselves, as well as for Crete, and calling my adjutant and aide before me, I said:

"Gentlemen, you are both in love with the same woman, and she is attached to each of you. Are you willing to win your bride?"

An affirmative answer was given by both, and I continued:

"That being the case, I will put you to the test; so take each of you thirty men, pick them if you choose, and you, Boyd, go by the lower valley road, and you, Constantine, by the mountain side road, and the one that recaptures Zuda from the Turks shall have her for a wife."

With pleasure the arrangement was entered into, and at nightfall the two rivals started, each at the head of thirty men, bound upon the perilous undertaking of winning their bride, by recapturing her from the lines of the Turks.

Two days and two nights dragged their weary, and to me, anxious length along, and I began to fear that evil had befallen my friends, and therefore determined to start at the head of fifty men to discover the cause of their delay.

Ordering my best men out, well armed and equipped, just as dark we started forth, and after a march of twenty American miles came to a mountain summit from which a wide view could be obtained for leagues around, and I determined to remain there concealed until daylight, for I knew that in the valley before me the Turks were encamped.

Two hours rest, and daylight stole upon us, and soon the camps of the enemy, the ruined Cretan villages, and the desolated country houses came in sight, and I started as I saw the will of the Xenophons was a blackened ruin, and dreaded that an awful fate might have befallen Zuda.

Far away off I could discern bodies of Turkish cavalry scouring the country, with here and there the more slowly moving infantry and artillery, all presenting a scene of beauty and grandeur seldom witnessed.

But, I had no time to linger, for I feared evil had befallen my friends, so was about to give the order to move on, when the sounds of strife smote my ear, and knowing that it could but be a contest between Turkish and Cretan soldiers, I called to my men to follow, and away we started down the steep and rugged mountain side, and guided by the pistol-shots and clash of steel, we entered a small glen where a strange scene burst upon our view.

Before me, at the distance of a hundred yards, I beheld two bands of combatants fighting with desperate energy, and led on by my two officers.

On I rushed, my men closely crowding after me, and suddenly appeared upon the spot where stood Constantine Adoneff and Boyd LaMotte; their cimiers crossed, and fighting with wild fury, while with his arm encircling Zuda's waist, the latter was slowly giving back before his unnumbered antagonist.

At my unexpected appearance the different bands ceased their fighting; but not so their leaders, who pressed on as if with more vigor.

With a bound I was beside them; a whirl of my cimier and their weapons were struck up, and I angrily said:

"For shame, gentlemen, to thus seek each other's lives! Major La Motte, what means this outrage?"

"It means, colonel, that with the loss of two-thirds of my men, I last night rescued Zuda from the power of the Turks, and returning toward our lines was attacked here by Captain Adoneff, who attempted to take from me my dearly won prize," answered Boyd, frankly.

"Miss Xenophon, what have you to say?" I queried.

The maiden looked up; her eyes filled with tears, and she gave a painful look of sorrow, as she replied:

"My parents were killed by the Turks, and I was saved to become the inmate of a Turkish officer's harem. Last night this gentleman, guided by a deserter, came through the lines, and most gallantly released me from captivity, while your officer endeavored to slay him to take me from him."

"Why do this, Adoneff?"

"I have but one answer, colonel—I love Zuda, and would give my life, my soul, for her," passionately answered the Russian, and then he continued:

"I, too, entered the Turkish lines, but, being set upon by a large force of cavalry, we were cut to pieces, and I retreated here to rest for the night, and this morning was surprised and grieved to suddenly behold my rival returning with the prize, and in my fury I endeavored to take her from him."

"You acted too hastily, Constantine. Boyd, you have won your bride; but come, we have no time to halt here, for yonder come the Turks upon us," I cried; and with promptness my men rallied around me, and fighting as we retreated, we dealt the enemy many severe blows, while they, alas! sent, besides a number of my band, one brave spirit to a soldier's grave in a foreign land, for Constantine Adoneff, as if striving to redeem his loss of caste, fought with terrible energy, and, after receiving his third wound, fell dead at my side.

We rescued his body, and after a sharp contest, reached our lines, and that night gave the unfortunate but noble Russian a soldier's burial, and none there were who mourned more deeply for him than his successful rival and Zuda, the woman he had so madly loved.

The sad end of the Cretan struggle is known to all, so I will not dwell upon it here, but add

that Boyd LaMotte and Zuda Xenophon were married in an ancient Greek chapel, and I gave the bride away; while a few weeks after, my adjutant and myself, resigning a party of us escaped from the blood-stained shores of Candia, in an open boat at night, and while I continued my wanderings, the brave American and his Cretan wife sailed for New York city, where they now live in health and happiness.

On the Prairie;

The Adventures of Amateur Hunters.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.

VII.—PETE'S EXPLOIT.

THE "good old time" hinted at by Pete Shafer came upon us about the first of December, and, indeed, it would not have required a great amount of faith to believe that the roaring fire was just about "freezing up." For the first week we could not keep comfortable, though we kept donning additional skin garments until we little resembled human beings. But then we learned the truth of Shafer's words; when half this load was cast aside, we were far more comfortable.

The river and creeks speedily froze over, and the snow soon covered the ground to a depth of three feet on a level. The intense cold formed a crust upon this, amply strong enough to support a man's weight, where not weakened by the growth of bushes. For security, however, we usually wore snow-shoes. Many an awkward tumble marked our attempts to handle these—at first—clumsy implements, but these were soon forgotten.

This cold snap opened another method of taking beaver, that for a time was rare sport to us boys. Each armed with an ax, and a sharp hook fastened firmly to the end of a stout pole, we stationed ourselves at the lodges, then, at a given signal, each began destroying the mud-and-grass domicile that he had chosen. Laying bare the inner chamber, we waited patiently. The beaver, at the first stroke, had taken to the water, but, as they can not remain submerged longer than two or three minutes without air, they returned to their haunts as soon as the sound from below died away. In one respect they are something like our little school-boy swimmers; when rising to air after a dive, their eyes for a moment are blinded by the streaming water. Though momentary, this blindness was long enough for our purpose, and an adroit stroke upon the head with ready ax stunned the beaver. Then, with the hooked staff, it was easy to draw the game within reach. This weather also gave us more time to devote to trapping foxes, wolves, etc., and, taking all in all, we did not suffer from our idleness.

One night our dogs seemed unusually excited by the snarling and yelping that was kept up around the dug-out, but we, supposing it occasioned by nothing more than wolves, paid but little attention to their actions. Shafer did peer out through a loop, but there was a fine, soft snow falling, and he could only distinguish half a dozen wolves skulking about. In the morning, however, he made a discovery.

"What's the matter, eh?" he grunted, in response to a question, as he stood glowering over a set of tracks in the layer of soft snow. "That's the matter—ten tracks—see? Wolf? Not much! Hain't ye got no eyes? Look at the footprint—the ball nigh twice as big as a wolf's. Then the toe-nails—full two inches long. Wolf? No—a painter. Rip-sawyer, too. Look! here it layed down. See whar its nose rested 'twixt his fo'-paws, an' here's whar its tail brushed. Purty nigh eight feet long. Nice pardner fer sleepin' with—I guess not!"

I don't say that any of the boys were badly scared, but I do know that during the next few days there was an unusual amount of curiosity displayed, judging from the manner in which we tried to look in every direction at once, when out upon our rounds. Though Pete said little, that little showed he was determined to obtain an interview with this stranger, but for some time he was foiled. It did no good to watch at the dug-out; though we often heard the wailing cry of the panther, it never was seen within range. Then Shafer trailed it by daylight, but ever lost the trail upon a northern slope, where the stiff breeze had kept the crust free from soft snow. By this time we had nearly forgotten our affright, and even longed for a collision with the monster, but were not gratified.

Pete was busy with his traps one day, when once more he came upon the broad track of the panther. This trail was fresh, with toes pointing in the direction Shafer was following, so he kept one eye upon the bank ahead. Then a low cry broke from his lips and he flung forward his rifle, which, contrary to custom, he had carried with him when visiting his traps, ever since first noting the panther-tracks.

Near the edge of the creek was crouched an old, gaunt beast, busily engaged in rending an otter, whose foot was still fast in the steel trap. The distance was barely fifty yards, the animal stretched full broadside toward Pete, so his long trailing seemed about to be rewarded. But an accident frustrated his hopes. As he sighted the animal's ear, the snow-crust beneath the hunter's knee broke, and he sunk suddenly several inches. This unexpected shock caused Pete to fire just as the rifle-muzzle dropped.

A shrill yell filled the air, and as Shafer sprang back, flashing forth his knife, he saw the panther darting with astounding rapidity up the valley, vanishing in an instant. Bitterly cursing his ill fortune, Pete reloaded his rifle and then advanced. The sight of the mangled otter did not lessen his wrath, but then Pete's eyes glistened. Beside the trap lay a long yellow claw, that he knew could only have come from the panther. A quick glance along its trail told him the truth. His bullet had crippled one of the animal's paws, and as he saw the stains where the foot had touched the snow-crust, Shafer knew that the brute was his meat. Stubborn as a Mexican mule, I doubt whether at that moment Pete would have accepted company, had any such been near.

Abandoning all else, he struck along the bloody trail. There was no difficulty in following it now, though in a short time Pete found the trail leading over the same slope where he had so often been baffled. Crossing the ridge, the blood-spots led down into a ravine, and Shafer advanced with greater caution as he saw that, in passing, the panther had slackened his pace, from the shorter intervals between the blood-spots. Among these rocks, somewhere, he knew must be its den, but Pete doggedly pressed on, though fully realizing the peril he might be incurring.

Half an hour more brought him to the end. He could see where the panther had entered its den, though a mass of evergreen vines concealed its exact position. Pete quickly decided upon his plan. Gliding noiselessly up the hill-side, climbing over the boulders until he gained a point directly above the den-entrance, Pete clutched the vines, and, with a vigorous jerk, tore them away from the rock, then grasped his revolver. Not a moment too soon either, for with an angry yell, the huge beast sprang out from its covert, crouching down

upon the narrow ledge, glaring wickedly around in search of its daring disturber.

At such short range that the flame fairly scorched the panther's hide, Pete fired two shots, one with either hand. A horrible scream followed, but the brute did not spring forward. The bullets had broken its spine. Another shot pierced its brain, and then, with a chuckle of delight, Pete sprang from his perch and stood over the beast. He was not long in realizing the folly of which he had been guilty.

A hoarse, snarling cry echoed from the cave, and quickly wheeling, Pete saw a pair of fiery eyes glaring at him from out the darkness. He knew then that he was confronting the mate to the panther he had just slain, and for once in his life, Pete owned to being frightened. Still he did not lose his presence of mind, and the cry was still ringing in his ears when he raised his pistols and fired at the threatening eyes. Mingled with the shots came another yell, and then a tawny body dashed through the air, striking full against his breast, when both man and beast fell heavily over the ledge.

Pete grappled with the panther, even as he fell, and then began a desperate struggle for life. The sudden shock had caused him to lose both pistols, but clutching the brute by its throat, even as its long claws pierced his breast, Shafer flashed forth his butcher-knife. He could give no clear account of what followed. It passed like a dream. His first recollection after the fall was of kneeling over the panther, plunging his stout knife repeatedly into the broad breast, as the panther quivered in death.

When his excitement was somewhat calmed, Pete saw why he had so easily conquered the beast. Its right foreleg was helpless, having been frightfully crushed, from knee to shoulder-blade. Only for that the result might have been different. This, too, explained why only one set of tracks had been seen; the second panther being crippled, its mate had been forced to provide for it, as well as himself.

Pete skinned the beasts, and managed to reach the dug-out with his load, but then fainted from loss of blood. It was over a week before he was fit for duty again. The largest panther-skin measured seven feet nine inches from tip to tip, and its mate was but little smaller.

Beat Time's Notes.

My father was the inventor of steamboats, though it is not generally known. His first boat was a curiosity; it was filled with endless machinery and was launched in the canal. The only difficulty with it was that it wouldn't go up-stream, but it sailed down-stream beautifully with the current, and when two mules were hitched to it, it went faster than the current itself.

He also invented a steam-wagon, which worked like a charm in going down a grade, but on a level road he had to use horses to it. It was just the thing to go down hill with, and my grandfather would have made a fortune with it if the Legislature had run all the roads down hill, but he failed to get it to change them.

I HAVE a fine dwelling-house which I desire to rent to some small family of ten children, and only two parents, that will pay at least two months rent in the year, and not make a stable out of the summer kitchen, nor split the front shutters up for kindlings, whatever they may do with the side shutters. To such a family that will split wood inside the house only on rainy days, and not knock every nail of the balusters from the stairs, nor drive nails all around in the walls in fruitless search for posts, nor have more than half the windows glazed with old hats and pillows, and will leave enough of the house when they move out to tell where it was, this house will be let on desirable terms.

I NEVER had to strike but one man: I knocked him against the side of the room, and he bounced against the other side, and backward and forward he went until he was caught by three men who laid him on the floor and put a brick on him to keep him down, and then he wanted to get up and go to bouncing again, it was such an uncontrollable lick and so persuasive.

THE old frame house in which I was born has been entirely carried off by relic-hunters. One man gathered a whole string of keyholes to wear on his watch-guard; another carried off the cellar, sat it up in his front yard, and put a glass case over it. Conscientious old fathers took the latch to raise their boys with, and men took the bricks of the chimney to line their hats with.

ONE of the highest compliments that was ever paid to a man was that of a western editor, who said of a deceased citizen that "no one ever complained that he paid a debt before he contracted it, and afterward he considered it too late."

THE hind feet of a mule are as hard to approach as the North Pole. If there are any more men left who want to try the experiment, I wish they would all try it at once, and one obituary would answer for all.

I DREAMED last night I was chased by a creditor. It was a horrible dream. I was badly frightened. After this I shall transfer my dreams to a foreign island where I shall not be likely to meet my creditors.

WHAT did you say I was, sir?" said a lawyer in court to another who was speaking. "I said you were nothing." "I accept your apology, sir."

WHEN my father died he left millions; indeed, I might say, and not be accused of falsehood, that he left all the money in the world.

THE young poet who sent me a poem on the Atlantic ocean is informed that it is on a very dry subject.

I HAVE universally found the best memories among the people I owe—they are always good on the recollections.

THE south winds are very balmy, because, I suppose, they come from Alabama; this is only a supposition, however.

WHAT is the difference between—between—well, I've forgotten it, but then, what is the difference, anyhow?